

CRYSTAL FORM

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This patent application claims the benefit of the following U.S. patent applications:
Ser. No. 60/366,784, filed Mar. 22, 2002; Ser. No. 60/411,874, filed Sept. 19, 2002; Ser. No.
5 60/425,596; filed Nov. 12, 2002 and Ser. No. 10/392,833, filed March 21, 2003 under 35
U.S.C. §119(e)(i).

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention is a novel crystal form of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-
10 pregn-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone.

The present invention includes a process for the transformation of a 3-enol ether $\Delta^{3,5}$ -steroid to the corresponding $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-ketal steroid (I-P).

The present invention includes a process for the transformation of a $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I), to the corresponding Δ^4 -3-ketosteroid-7 α -carboxylic acid (VI).

15 The present invention also includes a novel processes and novel intermediates to produce the pharmaceutically useful compound eplerenone.

Further, the invention includes processes for transformation of 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactone (CI) or 11 α -hydroxy steroids (CIV) to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -17-lactone (CII) or $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -steroids (CV) using a N-fluoroalkylamine reagents (CVI).

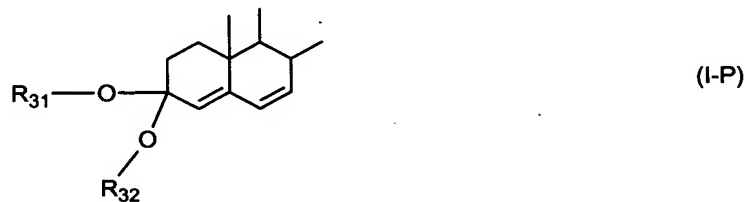
20 2. Description of the Related Art

There is no reliable method to predict the existence of a crystal form of a pharmaceutical. Further, if a material is crystalline there is no reliable method to predict its physical properties. Therefore, patents to novel crystal forms are well known. For example, US Patent 3,565,924 discloses and claims 25-hydroxycocalfiferol (25-HCC) which is a non-
25 crysalline solid. Later a novel crystal form, 25-HCC hemihydrate was patented, see US Patent 3,833,622. US Patent 4,521,431 discloses crystal forms 1 and 2 of ranitidine hydrochloride. US Patent 4,504,657 claims "crystalline 7-[D-.alpha.-(p-hydroxyphenyl)acetamido]-3-methyl-3-cephem-4-carboxylic acid monohydrate. US Patent 6,452,007 B1 claims the "S" and "T" crystal forms of 1-[5-methanesulfonamidoindolyl]-2-carbonyl]-4-[3-(1-methylethylamino)-2-
30 pyridinyl]piperazine. US Patent 6,444,813 B2 claims a novel crystal form of a known antibacterial agent, linezolid.

International Publications WO01/41535 and WO01/42272 disclose crystal forms of pharmaceutical agent eplerenone.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

Disclosed is a process for the preparation of a $\Delta^{4,6}$ -ketal of formula (I-P)



where R_{31} and R_{32} are

(1) the same or different and are C_1 - C_3 alkyl, and

(2) taken with the attached $-O-C-O-$ to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the

formula



where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are

$-H$,

C_1 - C_3 alkyl,

which comprises

(1) contacting a $\Delta^{3,5}$ -3-enol ether of formula (Alkyl enol ether)



where R^3 is

C_1 - C_3 alkyl,

CH_3-CO- ,

$\Phi-CO-$ or

$R_{Si-1}R_{Si-2}R_{Si-3}Si-$ where R_{Si-1} , R_{Si-2} and R_{Si-3} are the same or different and are C_1 - C_4 alkyl; with a hydride abstractor and an alcohol selected from the group consisting of alcohols of the formula:

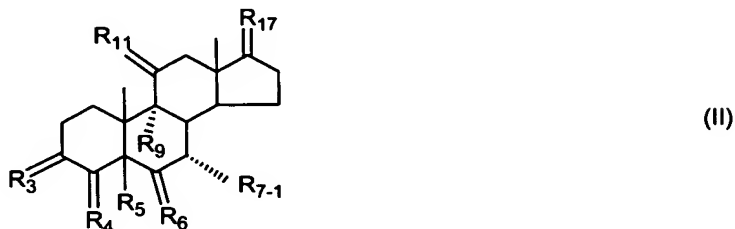
(a) $R_{31}-OH$, where R_{31} is as defined above,

(b) R_{32} -OH, where R_{32} is as defined above,

(c) $\text{HO}-(\text{CH}_2)-(\text{CR}_{33}\text{R}_{34})_{n1}-(\text{CH}_2)-\text{OH}$ where n_1 , R_{33} and R_{34} are as defined above,

(d) $\text{HO}-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{OH}$.

Also disclosed is a 7α -substituted steroid of formula (II)



5

where

(I) R_3 is = O; R_4 is $R_{4.1}:R_{4.2}$ where one of $R_{4.1}$ and $R_{4.2}$ is -H and the other of $R_{4.1}$ and $R_{4.2}$ is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R_6 is -H:-H;

10 (II) R_3 is $R_{3.3}:R_{3.4}$ and R_4 is $R_{4.3}:R_{4.4}$ where one of $R_{3.3}$ and $R_{3.4}$ is -O- R_{31} where R_{31} is C_1 - C_3 alkyl, the other of $R_{3.3}$ and $R_{3.4}$ is taken together with one of $R_{4.3}$ and $R_{4.4}$ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and the other of $R_{4.3}$ and $R_{4.4}$ is -H; R_6 is $R_{6.3}:R_{6.4}$ where one of $R_{6.3}$ and $R_{6.4}$ is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of $R_{6.3}$ and $R_{6.4}$ is -H;

15

(III) R_3 is α - $R_{3.5}:\beta$ - $R_{3.6}$ where $R_{3.5}$ is -O- R_{31} and $R_{3.6}$ is -O- R_{32} where R_{31} and R_{32} are the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of

C_1 - C_3 alkyl and

R_{31} and R_{32} are taken with the attached -O-C-O- to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or

20 6 atoms of the formula



where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are -H and C_1 - C_3 alkyl; R_4 is -H:-H; R_6 is $R_{6.5}:R_{6.6}$ where one of $R_{6.5}$ and $R_{6.6}$ is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of $R_{6.5}$ and $R_{6.6}$ is -H;

25

(IV) R_3 is α - $R_{3.7}$: β - $R_{3.8}$ where $R_{3.7}$ is $-\text{O}-R_{31}$ and $R_{3.8}$ is $-\text{O}-R_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are as defined above; R_4 is $R_{4.7}$: $R_{4.8}$ where one of $R_{4.7}$ and $R_{4.8}$ is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of $R_{4.7}$ and $R_{4.8}$ is $-\text{H}$; R_6 is $-\text{H}$; $-\text{H}$;

5 where $R_{7.1}$ is a molecular fragment of the formula (-A1)



or of the formula (-A2)



where X_1 is:

10

$-\text{S}-$,

$-\text{O}-$ or

$-\text{NX}_{1.1}-$ and where $X_{1.1}$ is:

$-\text{H}$,

C_1 - C_4 alkyl,

15

$-\text{CO}-\text{OX}_{1.2}$ where $X_{1.2}$ is C_1 - C_4 alkyl or $-\text{CH}_2-\phi$,

$-\text{CO}-X_{1.2}$ where $X_{1.2}$ is as defined above,

$-\text{CO}-\phi$ where $-\phi$ is substituted in the *o*-position with

$-\text{CO}-\text{O}-(\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_4 \text{ alkyl})$,

$-\text{SO}_2-(\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_3 \text{ alkyl})$,

20

$-\text{SO}_2-\phi$ where ϕ is optionally substituted with 1 or 2

C_1 - C_4 alkyl,

C_1 - C_4 alkoxy;

where R_b is selected from the group consisting of

$-\text{H}$,

25

C_1 - C_4 alkyl or

phenyl optionally substituted with 1 or 2

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

C₁-C₄ alkoxy,

where R_c is selected from the group consisting of:

- 5 -H,
 C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 C₁-C₄ alkoxy,
 -O-Si(R)₃ where the R's are the same or different and are -H, C₁-C₄
 alkyl, -φ, C₁-C₄ alkoxy and -OH,
 10 -F, -Cl, -Br, -I,
 -CO-OCH₃ and
 -CO-R_{c-1} where R_{c-1} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ;

where R_d is selected from the group consisting of

- H,
 15 -C≡N,
 C₁-C₁₀ alkyl;
 C₁-C₄ alkoxy;
 -CH₂-OR_{d-1} where R_{d-1} is -H or C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 -CH₂-N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d-6} are the same or different and are:
 20 C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 -φ,
 -CO-R_{d-6a} where R_{d-6a} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,
 -CH₂-O-CO-R_{d-1} where R_{d-1} is as defined above,
 -CH(OR_{d-1})₂ where R_{d-1} is as defined above and where the two R_{d-1}

25 taken together are:

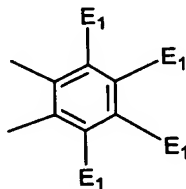
- CH₂-CH₂-,
 -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-,
 -CH₂-C(CH₃)₂-CH₂-,
 -CH(-O-CO-R_{d-1})₂ where R_{d-1} is as defined above,
 30 -Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above,
 -O-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above,

-Sn(R_{b-1})₃ where R_{b-1} is as defined above,

-S-R_{d-5} where R_{d-5} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-N(R_{d-6})₂ where R_{d-6} is as defined above,

where R_c and R_d taken together with the atoms to which they are attached to form



5

where E₁ are the same or different and are:

-H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-F, -Cl, -Br, -I,

10

-OE₁₋₁ where E₁₋₁ is:

-H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-φ or

-SiE₁₋₂E₁₋₃E₁₋₄ where E₁₋₂, E₁₋₃ and E₁₋₄ are the same or different

15 and are C₁-C₄ alkyl or C₁-C₄ alkoxy,

-S-E₁₋₅ where E₁₋₅ is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-S(O)₁₋₂-E₁₋₅ where E₁₋₅ is as defined above,

-N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d-6} are the same or different and are as

defined above,

20

-P(O)(O-E₁₋₁)₂ where E₁₋₁ is as defined above,

-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above;

-CE₁=M

(-B)

where E₁ is as defined above and

where M is:

25

(1) =O,

(2) =N-E₂ where E₂ is selected from the group consisting of

-H

C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 C₁-C₄ alkenyl containing 1 or 2 double bonds,
 C₁-C₄ alkynyl containing 1 triple bond,
 -CO-OE₂₋₁ where E₂₋₁ is -H or C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 5 -C(E₂₋₁)₂-OE₂₋₂ where E₂₋₁ are the same or different and are as defined
 above and where E₂₋₂ is

C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 -φ or
 -Si(R)₃ where the three R are the same or different and are
 10 defined above,
 -OE₂₋₂ where E₂₋₂ is as defined above,
 -S-E₂₋₃ where E₂₋₃ is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,
 -S(O)₁₋₂-E₂₋₃ where E₂₋₃ is as defined above,
 -N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d-6} are the same or different and are as defined
 15 above;
 -Si(R)₃ where the three R are as defined above;

(3) =C(E₂)₂ where the E₂ are the same or different and are as defined above,
 where E₁ and E₂ are taken together with the atoms to which they are attached to form a
 ring of 5 thru 7 members, optionally containing 3 thru 5
 20 -O-,
 -S-,
 -N=,
 -NX₁₋₁- where X₁₋₁ is as defined above,
 -CE₂= where E₂ is as defined above,
 25 -C(R_b)₂- where R_b is as defined above, and optionally containing 1 or 2
 additional double bonds;

-C≡C-E₂ (-C)

where E₂ is as defined above;

-CH₂-CH=CH₂ (D1)

30 -CH=C=CH₂ (D2)

-CH₂-C≡C-H (D3)

where R_9 is:

- (1) $-H$,
- (2) $-OH$,
- (3) $-O-(HYDROXY\ PROTECTING\ GROUP)$ where HYDROXY

5 PROTECTING GROUP is selected from the group consisting of

- $-Si(-CH_3)_3$,
- $-Si(-CH_2-CH_3)_3$,
- $-CO-CH_3$,
- $-CO-H$ and
- 10 $-SiH(CH_3)_2$,

- (4) $-F$;

where R_{11} is:

- (1) $=O$,
- (2) $-H:-H$,
- 15 (3) $\alpha-R_{11-1}:\beta-R_{11-2}$ where R_{11-1} is:

- (a) $-H$,
- (b) $-O-R_{11-3}$ where R_{11-3} is:
- (i) $-H$,

(ii) a HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP) where HYDROXY

20 PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above, and where R_{11-2} is:

- (a) $-H$,
- (b) $-O-R_{11-4}$ where R_{11-4} is:
- (i) $-H$,

(ii) a HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP) where HYDROXY

25 PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above, with the proviso that one of R_{11-1} and R_{11-2} must be $-H$,

(4) $R_{11-5}:R_{11-6}$ where one of R_{11-5} or R_{11-6} and R_9 are taken together with R_9 to form a second bond between C-9 and C-11 and the other of R_{11-5} or R_{11-6} is $-H$,

(5) $\alpha-R_{11-7}:\beta-R_{11-8}$ where R_{11-7} and R_9 are taken together with $-O-$ to form an
30 epoxide between C-9 and C-11 and R_{11-8} is $-H$;

where R_{17} is:

(1) =O;

(2) α -R₁₇₋₁: β -R₁₇₋₂ where R₁₇₋₁ is:

(a) -H,

(b) -C \equiv C-H,

5

(c) -C \equiv N,

(d) -C \equiv C-CH₂-O-R₁₇₋₁₋₁ where R₁₇₋₁₋₁ is selected from the group

consisting of

(i) -H,

(ii) -Si(R₁₇₋₁₋₂)₃ where R₁₇₋₁₋₂ are the same or different and are

10 C₁-C₄ alkyl,

(iii) 1-ethoxyethyl,

(iv) 2-tetrahydropyranyl,

(e) -C \equiv C-CH₂-O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP), where

HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above,

15

(f) -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-OH,

(g) -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP), where

HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above,

(h) -CH₂-CH₂-CO-O⁻ and where R₁₇₋₂ is -OH;

(3) α -R₁₇₋₃: β -R₁₇₋₄ where R₁₇₋₃ is -OH and where R₁₇₋₄ is:

20

(a) -CO-CH₃,

(b) -CO-CH₂-OH,

(c) -CO-CH₂-O-CO-(CH₂)₀₋₃-CH₃;

(4) α -R₁₇₋₅: β -R₁₇₋₆ where R₁₇₋₅ and R₁₇₋₆ are taken with the attached carbon

atom to form a three member epoxide containing -O-CH₂- where the attachment of the -O is

25

at R₁₇₋₆ in the β -orientation and the attachment of the CH₂- is at R₁₇₋₅ in the α -orientation;

(5) α -R₁₇₋₇: β -R₁₇₋₈ where R₁₇₋₇ and R₁₇₋₈ are taken with the attached carbon

atom to form a five member lactone containing -O-CO-CH₂-CH₂- where the attachment of

the CH₂- is at R₁₇₋₇ in the α -orientation and the attachment of the -O is at R₁₇₋₈ in the β -orientation;

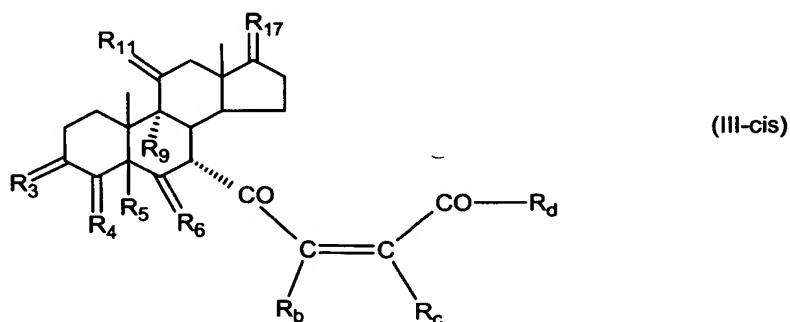
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(6) -O-CH(OR₁₇₋₉)-CH₂-CH₂····· where the bond from the oxygen (-O) is one of the four bonds at C-17 in the β -configuration and the bond from the methylene group

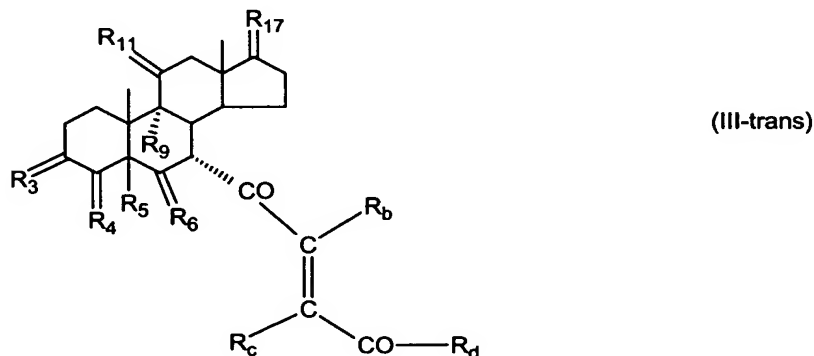
(CH₂····) is another of the four bonds at C-17 in the α -configuration to form a 5 member heterocycle containing one oxygen atom, where R₁₇₋₉ is -H or C₁-C₃ alkyl;

(7) α -R₁₇₋₁₁: β -R₁₇₋₁₂ where R₁₇₋₁₀ is -(CH₂)₁₋₂-CH=CH₂ and R₁₇₋₁₂ is -OH.

5 Further disclosed is a *cis* enedione of the formula (III-*cis*)



and a *trans* enedione of the formula (III-*trans*)



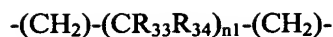
where

10 (I) R₃ is = O; R₄ is R₄₋₁:R₄₋₂ where one of R₄₋₁ and R₄₋₂ is -H and the other of R₄₋₁ and R₄₋₂ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R₆ is -H:-H;

(III) R₃ is α -R₃₋₅: β -R₃₋₆ where R₃₋₅ is -O-R₃₁ and R₃₋₆ is -O-R₃₂ where R₃₁ and R₃₂ are the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of

15 C₁-C₃ alkyl and

R₃₁ and R₃₂ are taken with the attached -O-C-O- to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the formula



where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are $-\text{H}$ and $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl; R_4 is $-\text{H}; -\text{H}$; R_6 is $\text{R}_{6-5}; \text{R}_{6-6}$ where one of R_{6-5} and R_{6-6} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{6-5} and R_{6-6} is $-\text{H}$;

(IV) R_3 is $\alpha\text{-R}_{3-7}; \beta\text{-R}_{3-8}$ where R_{3-7} is $-\text{O-R}_{31}$ and R_{3-8} is $-\text{O-R}_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are as defined above; R_4 is $\text{R}_{4-7}; \text{R}_{4-8}$ where one of R_{4-7} and R_{4-8} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{4-7} and R_{4-8} is $-\text{H}$; R_6 is $-\text{H}; -\text{H}$;

where $\text{R}_9, \text{R}_{11}, \text{R}_{17}$ are as defined above;

where R_b is selected from the group consisting of

$-\text{H}$,

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl or

phenyl optionally substituted with 1 or 2

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl,

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkoxy,

where R_c is selected from the group consisting of:

$-\text{H}$,

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl,

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkoxy,

$-\text{O-Si(R)}_3$ where the R 's are the same or different and are $-\text{H}$, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl, $-\phi$, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkoxy and $-\text{OH}$,

$-\text{F}$, $-\text{Cl}$, $-\text{Br}$, $-\text{I}$,

$-\text{CO-OCH}_3$ and

$-\text{CO-R}_{c-1}$ where R_{c-1} is $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl or $-\phi$;

where R_d is selected from the group consisting of

$-\text{H}$,

$-\text{C}\equiv\text{N}$,

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ alkyl;

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkoxy;

-CH₂-OR_{d-1} where R_{d-1} is -H or C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-CH₂-N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d-6} are the same or different and are:

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-φ,

5 -CO-R_{d-6a} where R_{d-6a} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-CH₂-O-CO-R_{d-1} where R_{d-1} is as defined above,

-CH(OR_{d-1})₂ where R_{d-1} is as defined above and where the two R_{d-1} taken

together are:

-CH₂-CH₂-,

10 -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-,

-CH₂-C(CH₃)₂-CH₂-,

-CH(-O-CO-R_{d-1})₂ where R_{d-1} is as defined above,

-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above,

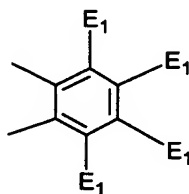
-O-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above,

15 -Sn(R_{b-1})₃ where R_{b-1} is as defined above,

-S-R_{d-5} where R_{d-5} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-N(R_{d-6})₂ where R_{d-6} is as defined above,

where R_c and R_d taken together with the atoms to which they are attached to form



20 where E₁ are the same or different and are:

-H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-F, -Cl, -Br, -I,

-OE₁₋₁ where E₁₋₁ is:

25 -H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-φ or

-SiE₁₋₂E₁₋₃E₁₋₄ where E₁₋₂, E₁₋₃ and E₁₋₄ are the same or different and are C₁-C₄ alkyl or C₁-C₄ alkoxy,

-S-E₁₋₅ where E₁₋₅ is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

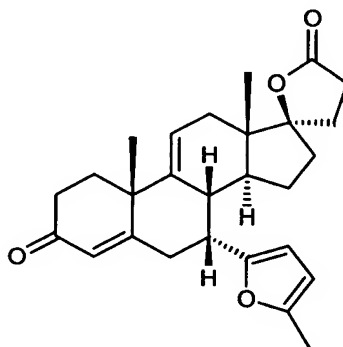
-S(O)₁₋₂-E₁₋₅ where E₁₋₅ is as defined above,

5 -N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d-6} are the same or different and are as defined above,

-P(O)(O-E₁₋₁)₂ where E₁₋₁ is as defined above,

-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above.

Disclosed is 17β-hydroxy-7α-(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-
10 carboxylic acid, γ-lactone a compound of the formula



in crystalline form having a powder X-ray diffraction spectrum of:

15 Two-Theta Angle (°) with a range of

	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
	6.46	6.59
	10.46	10.70
	11.48	11.70
20	12.55	12.79
	14.19	14.36
	15.06	15.30
	16.10	16.65
	16.55	16.74

	17.79	18.01
	18.25	18.46
	19.46	19.70
	20.06	20.30
5	20.86	21.25
	21.60	21.80
	23.14	23.35
	24.74	24.95
	25.15	25.96
10	25.85	26.05
	27.35	27.55
	28.26	28.90
	28.75	28.85
	29.91	30.14
15	30.90	31.10
	31.86	32.05
	32.59	32.79
	33.14	33.89
	33.63	34.00
20	34.27	34.49
	35.52	35.75
	36.06	36.30
	37.02	37.21
	37.74	37.91
25	38.42	38.64
	39.35	39.39

to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, where

Two-Theta Angle is measured in degrees.

Also disclosed is 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone in crystalline form having a powder X-ray diffraction spectrum of:
 30 Two-Theta Angle ($^{\circ}$) and Relative Intensity (%) with a ranges of:

	<u>Two-Theta Angle (°)</u>		<u>Relative Intensity (%)</u>	
	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
5	6.46	6.59	1.0	1.6
	10.46	10.70	10.7	58.3
	11.48	11.70	11.7	20.8
	12.55	12.79	2.2	4.2
	14.19	14.36	14.4	100.0
	15.06	15.30	15.3	29.5
10	16.10	16.65	7.2	50.3
	16.55	16.74	16.7	66.4
	17.79	18.01	18.0	100.0
	18.25	18.46	18.5	34.5
	19.46	19.70	6.1	12.6
	20.06	20.30	19.5	28.1
15	20.86	21.25	16.1	36.3
	21.60	21.80	10.8	20.0
	23.14	23.35	23.3	48.0
	24.74	24.95	11.5	19.0
	25.15	25.96	4.4	30.3
	25.85	26.05	12.1	31.2
20	27.35	27.55	9.5	22.7
	28.26	28.90	2.1	6.2
	28.75	28.85	6.6	11.1
	29.91	30.14	1.9	3.5
	30.90	31.10	5.6	10.4
	31.86	32.05	1.2	3.7
25	32.59	32.79	0.9	2.3
	33.14	33.89	1.6	4.5
	33.63	34.00	1.1	4.9
	34.27	34.49	1.4	2.2
	35.52	35.75	1.3	3.9

	36.06	36.30	7.9	27.0
	37.02	37.21	3.9	6.2
	37.74	37.91	1.0	2.2
	38.42	38.64	1.2	2.9
5	39.35	39.39	1.6	1.8

to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, where

Two-Theta Angle is measured in degrees and

Relative Intensity is the intensity percentage of each peak relative to the strongest peak.

10 Further disclosed is 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone in crystalline form having a powder X-ray diffraction spectrum of Two-Theta Angle ($^{\circ}$), d-spacing (\AA) and Relative Intensity (%) with ranges of:

	<u>Two-Theta Angle ($^{\circ}$)</u>		<u>d-spacing (\AA)</u>		<u>Relative Intensity (%)</u>	
	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
15	6.46	6.59	13.39	13.66	1.0	1.6
	10.46	10.70	8.26	8.45	10.7	58.3
	11.48	11.70	7.56	7.70	11.7	20.8
	12.55	12.79	6.92	7.05	2.2	4.2
	14.19	14.36	6.16	6.24	14.4	100.0
20	15.06	15.30	5.79	5.88	15.3	29.5
	16.10	16.65	5.32	5.50	7.2	50.3
	16.55	16.74	5.29	5.35	16.7	66.4
	17.79	18.01	4.92	4.98	18.0	100.0
	18.25	18.46	4.80	4.86	18.5	34.5
25	19.46	19.70	4.50	4.56	6.1	12.6
	20.06	20.30	4.37	4.42	19.5	28.1
	20.86	21.25	4.18	4.26	16.1	36.3
	21.60	21.80	4.07	4.11	10.8	20.0
	23.14	23.35	3.81	3.84	23.3	48.0
30	24.74	24.95	3.57	3.60	11.5	19.0
	25.15	25.96	3.43	3.54	4.4	30.3

	25.85	26.05	3.42	3.44	12.1	31.2
	27.35	27.55	3.24	3.26	9.5	22.7
	28.26	28.90	3.09	3.16	2.1	6.2
	28.75	28.85	3.09	3.10	6.6	11.1
5	29.91	30.14	2.96	2.98	1.9	3.5
	30.90	31.10	2.87	2.89	5.6	10.4
	31.86	32.05	2.79	2.81	1.2	3.7
	32.59	32.79	2.73	2.75	0.9	2.3
	33.14	33.89	2.64	2.70	1.6	4.5
10	33.63	34.00	2.63	2.66	1.1	4.9
	34.27	34.49	2.60	2.61	1.4	2.2
	35.52	35.75	2.51	2.53	1.3	3.9
	36.06	36.30	2.47	2.49	7.9	27.0
	37.02	37.21	2.41	2.43	3.9	6.2
15	37.74	37.91	2.37	2.38	1.0	2.2
	38.42	38.64	2.33	2.34	1.2	2.9
	39.35	39.39	2.29	2.29	1.6	1.8

to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, where

Two-Theta Angle is measured in degrees,

20 d-Spacing is measured in angstroms, and

Relative Intensity is the intensity percentage of each peak relative to the strongest peak.

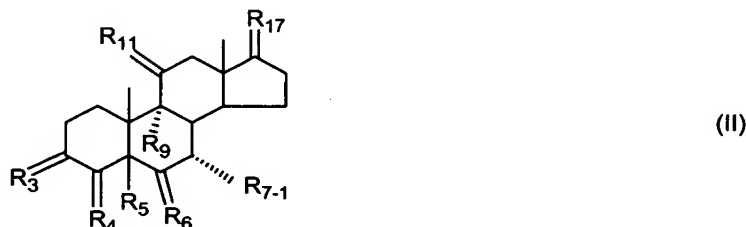
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Eplerenone is 9 α ,11 α -epoxy-17 β -hydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, 25 γ -lactone, methyl ester and as such contains a 7 α -carbomethoxy substituent. It is useful as a pharmaceutical agent for the treatment of hypertension and congestive heart failure. A major difficulty in the production of eplerenone is introduction of the 7 α -carbomethoxy substituent. The processes and intermediates of the present invention are improved processes for the preparation of eplerenone.

30 CHART A discloses the general process of the invention when the adduct at the 7 α -position, -R₇₋₁ is (-A1). The process of the present invention begins with a protected or

unprotected $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid (I). Since the steroid A-ring can be protected or not protected, CHART B discloses an improved process for protection of the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid (I) starting material as a C-3 protected $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-ketal steroid (I-P). CHART C discloses an alternative route (ozonolysis) for transformation of the 7α -substituted steroid (II) to eplerenone (IX). CHART D discloses the general process when the steroid A-ring is unprotected and R_{7-1} is the variable substituent (-A1). CHART E discloses the preferred process for the transformation of a $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) to eplerenone (IX). CHART F discloses the reversible nature of the conversion of the carboxylic acid (VI) with the 5,7-lactone (VII). CHART G discloses the general process of the invention when $-R_{7-1}$ is (-A2). CHART H discloses the general process of the invention when $-R_{7-1}$ is (-B), (-C), (-D1), (-D2) or (-D3).

The first step in the process of CHART A is to prepare a 7α -substituted steroid (II) of the formula



where

- (I) R_3 is =O; R_4 is $R_{4-1}:R_{4-2}$ where one of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is -H and the other of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R_6 is -H:-H;
- (II) R_3 is $R_{3-3}:R_{3-4}$ and R_4 is $R_{4-3}:R_{4-4}$ where one of R_{3-3} and R_{3-4} is -O- R_{31} where R_{31} is C_1 - C_3 alkyl, the other of R_{3-3} and R_{3-4} is taken together with one of R_{4-3} and R_{4-4} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and the other of R_{4-3} and R_{4-4} is -H; R_6 is $R_{6-3}:R_{6-4}$ where one of R_{6-3} and R_{6-4} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{6-3} and R_{6-4} is -H;
- (III) R_3 is α - R_{3-5} : β - R_{3-6} where R_{3-5} is -O- R_{31} and R_{3-6} is -O- R_{32} where R_{31} and R_{32} are the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of

C₁-C₃ alkyl and

R₃₁ and R₃₂ are taken with the attached -O-C-O- to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the formula

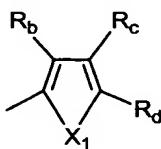


5 where n₁ is 0 or 1;

where R₃₃ and R₃₄ are the same or different and are -H and C₁-C₃ alkyl; R₄ is -H:-H; R₆ is R₆₋₅:R₆₋₆ where one of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is -H;

10 (IV) R₃ is α-R₃₋₇:β-R₃₋₈ where R₃₋₇ is -O-R₃₁ and R₃₋₈ is -O-R₃₂ where R₃₁ and R₃₂ are as defined above; R₄ is R₄₋₇:R₄₋₈ where one of R₄₋₇ and R₄₋₈ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R₄₋₇ and R₄₋₈ is -H; R₆ is -H:-H;

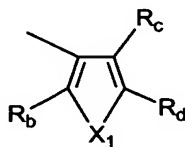
where R₇₋₁ is a molecular fragment of the formula (-A1)



(-A1)

15

or of the formula (-A2)



(-A2)

where X₁ is:

-S-,

20

-O- or

-NX₁₋₁- and where X₁₋₁ is:

-H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-CO-OX₁₋₂ where X₁₋₂ is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -CH₂-φ,

25

-CO-X₁₋₂ where X₁₋₂ is as defined above,

-CO- ϕ where ϕ is substituted in the *o*-position with
 -CO-O-(C₁-C₄ alkyl),
 -SO₂-(C₁-C₃ alkyl),
 -SO₂- ϕ where ϕ is optionally substituted with 1 or 2
 5 C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 C₁-C₄ alkoxy;

where R_b is selected from the group consisting of

-H,
 C₁-C₄ alkyl or
 10 phenyl optionally substituted with 1 or 2
 C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 C₁-C₄ alkoxy,

where R_c is selected from the group consisting of:

-H,
 15 C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 C₁-C₄ alkoxy,
 -O-Si(R)₃ where the R's are the same or different and are -H, C₁-C₄
 alkyl, - ϕ , C₁-C₄ alkoxy and -OH,
 -F, -Cl, -Br, -I,
 20 -CO-OCH₃ and
 -CO-R_{c-1} where R_{c-1} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or - ϕ ;

where R_d is selected from the group consisting of

-H,
 -C \equiv N,
 25 C₁-C₁₀ alkyl;
 C₁-C₄ alkoxy;
 -CH₂-OR_{d-1} where R_{d-1} is -H or C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 -CH₂-N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d-6} are the same or different and are:
 C₁-C₄ alkyl,
 30 - ϕ ,
 -CO-R_{d-6a} where R_{d-6a} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or - ϕ ,

-CH₂-O-CO-R_{d-1} where R_{d-1} is as defined above,

-CH(OR_{d-1})₂ where R_{d-1} is as defined above and where the two R_{d-1}

taken together are:

-CH₂-CH₂-,

-CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-,

-CH₂-C(CH₃)₂-CH₂-,

-CH(-O-CO-R_{d-1})₂ where R_{d-1} is as defined above,

-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above,

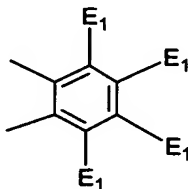
-O-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above,

-Sn(R_{b-1})₃ where R_{b-1} is as defined above,

-S-R_{d-5} where R_{d-5} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-N(R_{d-6})₂ where R_{d-6} is as defined above,

where R_c and R_d taken together with the atoms to which they are attached to form



where E₁ are the same or different and are:

-H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-F, -Cl, -Br, -I,

-OE₁₋₁ where E₁₋₁ is:

-H,

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-φ or

-SiE₁₋₂E₁₋₃E₁₋₄ where E₁₋₂, E₁₋₃ and E₁₋₄ are the same or different

and are C₁-C₄ alkyl or C₁-C₄ alkoxy,

-S-E₁₋₅ where E₁₋₅ is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-S-(O)₁₋₂-E₁₋₅ where E₁₋₅ is as defined above,

-Si(R)₃ where R is as defined above;

where E_1 is as defined above and

where M is:

(2) $=N-E_2$ where E_2 is selected from the group consisting of

-H

C₁-C₄ alkenyl containing 1 or 2 double bonds,

C₁-C₄ alkynyl containing 1 triple bond,

-CO-OE₂₋₁ where E₂₋₁ is -H or C₁-C₄ alkyl,

15 $\text{-C(E}_{2,1}\text{)}_2\text{-OE}_{2,2}$ where $\text{E}_{2,1}$ are the same or different and are as defined above and where $\text{E}_{2,2}$ is

C₁-C₄ alkyl,

-φ or

–Si(R)₃ where the three R are the same or different and are

20 defined above,

-OE₂₋₂ where E₂₋₂ is as defined above,

-S-E₂₋₃ where E₂₋₃ is C₁-C₄ alkyl or -φ,

-S-(O)₁₋₂-E₂₋₃ where E₂₋₃ is as defined above,

-N(R_{d-6})₂ where the two R_{d6} are the same or different and are as defined

25 above;

-Si(R)₃ where the three R are as defined above:

(3) $=C(E_2)_2$ where the E_2 are the same or different and are as defined above,

where E₁ and E₂ are taken together with the atoms to which they are attached to form a ring of 5 thru 7 members, optionally containing 3 thru 5

30 -0-

-S-

-N=,

-NX₁₋₁- where X₁₋₁ is as defined above,

-CE₂= where E₂ is as defined above,

-C(R_b)₂- where R_b is as defined above, and optionally containing 1 or 2

5 additional double bonds;

-C≡C-E₂ (-C)

where E₂ is as defined above;

-CH₂-CH=CH₂ (-D1)

-CH=C=CH₂ (-D2)

10 -CH₂-C≡C-H (-D3)

where R₉ is:

(1) -H,

(2) -OH,

(3) -O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP) where HYDROXY

15 PROTECTING GROUP is selected from the group consisting of

-Si(-CH₃)₃,

-Si(-CH₂-CH₃)₃,

-CO-CH₃,

-CO-H and

20 -SiH(CH₃)₂,

(4) -F;

where R₁₁ is:

(1) =O,

(2) -H:-H,

25 (3) α-R₁₁₋₁:β-R₁₁₋₂ where R₁₁₋₁ is:

(a) -H,

(b) -O-R₁₁₋₃ where R₁₁₋₃ is:

(i) -H,

(ii) a HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP) where HYDROXY

30 PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above, and where R₁₁₋₂ is:

(a) -H,

(b) $-O-R_{11-4}$ where R_{11-4} is:

(i) $-H$,

(ii) a HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP) where HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above, with the proviso that one of R_{11-1} and R_{11-2} must be $-H$,

(4) $R_{11-5}:R_{11-6}$ where one of R_{11-5} or R_{11-6} and R_9 are taken together with R_9 to form a second bond between C-9 and C-11 and the other of R_{11-5} or R_{11-6} is $-H$,

(5) $\alpha-R_{11-7}:\beta-R_{11-8}$ where R_{11-7} and R_9 are taken together with $-O-$ to form an epoxide between C-9 and C-11 and R_{11-8} is $-H$;

where R_{17} is:

(1) $=O$;

(2) $\alpha-R_{17-1}:\beta-R_{17-2}$ where R_{17-1} is:

(a) $-H$,

(b) $-C\equiv C-H$,

(c) $-C\equiv N$,

(d) $-C\equiv C-CH_2-O-R_{17-1-1}$ where R_{17-1-1} is selected from the group

consisting of

(i) $-H$,

(ii) $-\text{Si}(R_{17-1-2})_3$ where R_{17-1-2} are the same or different and are

C_1-C_4 alkyl,

(iii) 1-ethoxyethyl,

(iv) 2-tetrahydropyranyl,

(e) $-C\equiv C-CH_2-O-(\text{HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP})$, where HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above,

(f) $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{OH}$,

(g) $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-O-(\text{HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP})$ where HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP is as defined above,

(h) $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{CO}-O^-$ and where R_{17-2} is $-\text{OH}$;

(3) $\alpha-R_{17-3}:\beta-R_{17-4}$ where R_{17-3} is $-\text{OH}$ and where R_{17-4} is:

(a) $-\text{CO}-\text{CH}_3$,

(b) $-\text{CO}-\text{CH}_2-\text{OH}$,

(c) $-\text{CO}-\text{CH}_2-\text{O}-\text{CO}-(\text{CH}_2)_{0-3}-\text{CH}_3$;

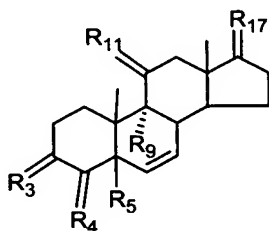
(4) $\alpha\text{-R}_{17-5}:\beta\text{-R}_{17-6}$ where R_{17-5} and R_{17-6} are taken with the attached carbon atom to form a three member epoxide containing $-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-$ where the attachment of the $-\text{O}$ is at R_{17-6} in the β -orientation and the attachment of the CH_2- is at R_{17-5} in the α -orientation;

5 (5) $\alpha\text{-R}_{17-7}:\beta\text{-R}_{17-8}$ where R_{17-7} and R_{17-8} are taken with the attached carbon atom to form a five member lactone containing $-\text{O}-\text{CO}-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-$ where the attachment of the CH_2- is at R_{17-7} in the α -orientation and the attachment of the $-\text{O}$ is at R_{17-8} in the β -orientation;

(6) $-\text{O}-\text{CH}(\text{OR}_{17-9})-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2\cdots$ where the bond from the oxygen ($-\text{O}$) is one of the four bonds at C-17 in the β -configuration and the bond from the methylene group ($\text{CH}_2\cdots$) is another of the four bonds at C-17 in the α -configuration to form a 5 member heterocycle containing one oxygen atom, where R_{17-9} is $-\text{H}$ or $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl;

(7) $\alpha\text{-R}_{17-11}:\beta\text{-R}_{17-12}$ where R_{17-10} is $-(\text{CH}_2)_{1-2}-\text{CH}=\text{CH}_2$ and R_{17-12} is $-\text{OH}$; which comprises:

15 (1) contacting a $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) of the formula



where

(I) R_3 is $=\text{O}$; R_4 is $\text{R}_{4-1}:\text{R}_{4-2}$ where one of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is $-\text{H}$ and the other of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached;

20 (I-ketal) R_3 is $\text{R}_{3-9}:\text{R}_{3-10}$ where R_{3-9} is $-\text{O}-\text{R}_{31}$ and R_{3-10} is $-\text{O}-\text{R}_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl and

R_{31} and R_{32} are taken with the attached $-\text{O}-\text{C}-\text{O}-$ to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or
25 6 atoms of the formula



where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are $-H$ and C_1-C_3 alkyl; R_4 is

$R_{4.9}$; $R_{4.10}$ where one of $R_{4.9}$ and $R_{4.10}$ is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of $R_{4.9}$ and $R_{4.10}$ is

5 $-H$;

where R_9 , R_{11} and R_{17} are as defined above, with an adduct selected from compounds (a) of the formula (A)



or



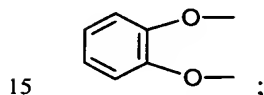
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where X_1 , R_b , R_c and R_d are as defined above, and

where R_a is selected from the group consisting of $-H$, $-ZnL$, $-BL$, $-SiL_3$,

$-SnL_3$, $-Cu$, $-CuL$, $-AlL_2$, $-HgL$, $-Ag$, $-MgL$, $-Li$ and $-COOH$, where L is $-OH$, C_1-C_4 alkyl,

$-F$, $-Cl$, $-Br$, $-I$, $-CN$, $-O(C_1-C_3 \text{ alkyl})$, 2-thienyl, $(CH_3)_2C(O-)-C(O-)C(CH_3)_2$ and



(b) of the formula (A')



where R_b , R_c and R_d are as defined above;

(c) of the formula (A'')



20

where R_e is:

C_1 - C_4 alkyl,

$-\text{CO}-(C_1\text{-}C_4 \text{ alkyl or } -\phi)$,

$-\text{Si}(\text{R})_3$ where R is as defined above and where X_1 , R_b , R_c and R_d are as

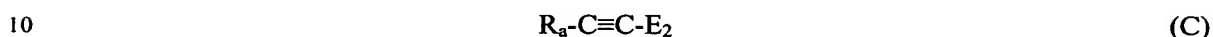
5 defined above;

(d) of the formula (B)



where R_a , E_1 and M are as defined above;

(e) of the formula (C)



where R_a and E_2 are as defined above;

(f) of the formulas (D1, D2 and D3)

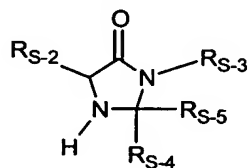


where R_a is as defined above, in the presence of:

(1) a Lewis Acid,

(2) a proton acid with a pK_a of < about 5 or

(3) a salt of a secondary amine of the formula



20

where

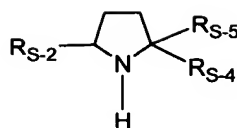
R_{S-2} is $-\text{H}$, C_1 - C_4 alkyl, $-\phi$, and $-\text{CH}_2\text{-}\phi$;

R_{S-3} is $-\text{H}$, C_1 - C_4 alkyl;

R_{S-4} is $-\text{H}$, C_1 - C_4 alkyl, $-\phi$;

25 R_{S-5} is $-\text{H}$, C_1 - C_4 alkyl, $-\phi$;

and



where

R_{S-2} is $-H$, C_1-C_4 alkyl, $-\phi$, and $-CH_2-\phi$;

R_{S-4} is $-H$, C_1-C_4 alkyl, $-\phi$;

5 R_{S-5} is $-H$, C_1-C_4 alkyl, $-\phi$;

with an acid of pK_a of $<$ about 2.

For the Δ^4 -3-keto or ketal thereof (I) starting material it is preferred that R_3 , R_4 and R_5 are (I) R_3 is $=O$; R_4 is $R_{4-1}:R_{4-2}$ where one of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is $-H$ and the other of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R_6 is $-H:-H$.

For the 7α -substituted steroid (II), there were four sets of steroid A-/B-rings identified above. Groups (I), (III) and (IV) are operable in the processes of the present invention. However, group (II) where R_3 is $R_{3-3}:R_{3-4}$ and R_4 is $R_{4-3}:R_{4-4}$ where one of R_{3-3} and R_{3-4} is $-O-R_{31}$ where R_{31} is C_1-C_3 alkyl, the other of R_{3-3} and R_{3-4} is taken together with one of R_{4-3} and R_{4-4} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and the other of R_{4-3} and R_{4-4} is $-H$; R_6 is $R_{6-3}:R_{6-4}$ where one of R_{6-3} and R_{6-4} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{6-3} and R_{6-4} is $-H$; is a $\Delta^{3,5}$ -3,3-dialkoxy ring system which, as such, can not be transformed to the other intermediates of the present invention. It is useful because it can be transformed to the corresponding Δ^4 -3-keto steroid A-/B-ring system which is useful in the processes of the present invention.

For the 7α -substituted steroid (II) and other steroidal compounds of the invention, except the 5,7-bislactone (VII), with regard to the steroidal A-/B-rings, it is preferred that R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 are selected from the group consisting of:

25 (I) R_3 is $=O$; R_4 is $R_{4-1}:R_{4-2}$ where one of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is $-H$ and the other of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R_6 is $-H:-H$;

(III) R_3 is $\alpha-R_{3-5}:\beta-R_{3-6}$ where R_{3-5} is $-O-R_{31}$ and R_{3-6} is $-O-R_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are taken with the attached $-O-C-O-$ to form a cyclic ketal of 5 atoms of the formula $-(CH_2)-$

(CR₃₃R₃₄)_{n1}-(CH₂)- where n₁ is 0; R₄ is -H:-H; R₆ is R₆₋₅:R₆₋₆ where one of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is -H;

(III) R₃ is α-R₃₋₅:β-R₃₋₆ where R₃₋₅ is -O-R₃₁ and R₃₋₆ is -O-R₃₂ where R₃₁ and R₃₂ are taken with the attached -O-C-O- to form a cyclic ketal of 6 atoms of the formula -(CH₂)-
 5 (CR₃₃R₃₄)_{n1}-(CH₂)- where n₁ is 1 and R₃₃ and R₃₄ are both C₁ alkyl; R₄ is -H:-H; R₆ is R₆₋₅:R₆₋₆ where one of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is -H.

For the 7α-substituted steroid (II) and other steroidal compounds of the invention,
 10 except the 5,7-bislactone (VII), with regard to the steroidal A-/B-rings, it is more preferred that R₃, R₄, R₅ and R₆ are:

(I) R₃ is =O; R₄ is R₄₋₁:R₄₋₂ where one of R₄₋₁ and R₄₋₂ is -H and the other of R₄₋₁ and R₄₋₂ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R₆ is -H:-H.

15 With regard to the steroidal C-ring, it is preferred that R₉ and R₁₁ are:

(a) R₁₁ is R₁₁₋₅:R₁₁₋₆ where one of R₁₁₋₅ or R₁₁₋₆ and R₉ are taken together with R₉ to form a second bond between C-9 and C-11 and the other of R₁₁₋₅ or R₁₁₋₆ is -H,

(b) α-R₁₁₋₇:β-R₁₁₋₈ where R₁₁₋₇ and R₉ are taken together with -O- to form an epoxide between C-9 and C-11 and R₁₁₋₈ is -H,

20 (c) R₉ is -H and R₁₁ is α-R₁₁₋₁:β-R₁₁₋₂ where R₁₁₋₁ is -O-R₁₁₋₃ where R₁₁₋₃ is -H, and where R₁₁₋₂ is -H. It is more preferred that R₉ and R₁₁ are:

(a) R₁₁ is R₁₁₋₅:R₁₁₋₆ where one of R₁₁₋₅ or R₁₁₋₆ and R₉ are taken together with R₉ to form a second bond between C-9 and C-11 and other of R₁₁₋₅ or R₁₁₋₆ is -H.

25 With regard to the steroidal D-ring, it is preferred that R₁₇ is selected from the group consisting of:

(a) α-R₁₇₋₇:β-R₁₇₋₈ where R₁₇₋₇ and R₁₇₋₈ are taken with the attached carbon atom to form a five member lactone containing -O-CO-CH₂-CH₂- where the attachment of the CH₂- is at R₁₇₋₇ in the α-orientation and the attachment of the -O is at R₁₇₋₈ in the β-orientation,

30 (b) =O;

(c) α-R₁₇₋₁:β-R₁₇₋₂ where R₁₇₋₁ is -C≡C-H and where R₁₇₋₂ is -OH,



With regard to the 7 α -substituted steroid (II), it is preferred that R₇₋₁ is substituent of formula (-A1). It is also preferred that X₁ is -O-. It is preferred that R_b and R_c are -H and it is preferred that R_d is C₁ alkyl. It is preferred that R_a is -H. It is preferred that for R_a that L is

- 5 -ZnL is -Cl, -Br, -I;
- BL is catecholate,
- two -OH,
- HO-CH₂-CH₂-OH,
- HO-CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-OH,
- 10 HO-CH₂-C(CH₃)₂-CH₂-OH;
- SiL₃ is C₁ alkyl;
- SnL₃ is C₁ or *n*-C₄ alkyl;
- CuL is 2-thienyl or -CN and
- AlL₂ is C₁-C₂ alkyl.

- 15 When R_a is Cu, there can be two R_a groups for one Cu in which case the Cu is anionic.

 The preferences for the variable substituents R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇₋₁, R₉, R₁₁, R₁₇, R_a, R_b, R_c, R_d and X₁ are not just for the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) and/or the 7 α -substituted steroid (II), but rather are for all the compounds (I) thru (XV) of the invention, except as expressly noted. Similarly, the preferences for other variable substituents such as

20 R₇₋₂ discussed below and/or chemical reagents used in this patent such as oxygen donating agent, halogenating agent, isomerization catalyst, hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent, acid forming agent, acylation catalyst, oxidatively cleaving agent, deoxygenating agent, are defined the same throughout the patent as the first time they are discussed. Since many of these variable substituents and chemical reagents are referred to numerous times, it would be

25 redundant each time they are used to repeatedly mention what is included, what is preferred and more preferred.

 It is preferred that the acid reactant be a Lewis acid. The Lewis acid must be electrophilic enough to complex with the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I), but not so electrophilic that it complexes with the nucleophilic reagent (A1), (A2), (B), (C), (D1), (D2)

30 or (D3) as is known to those skilled in the art. Further, it is preferred that the Lewis Acid be used in the presence of an alcohol selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₃ alcohols,

ethylene glycol, 1,2- or 1,3-propylene glycol, 2,2-dimethyl- or 2,2-diethyl-1,3-propylene glycol and phenol. It is more preferred that the alcohol be a C₁-C₃ alcohol or mixture thereof.

Useful Lewis acids include those selected from the group consisting of

- BX₃, AlX₃, SnX₂, SnX₄, SiX₄, MgX₂, ZnX₂, TiX₄,
- 5 Rh(acac)(CH₂CH₂)₂(2,2'-bis(diphenylphosphino)-1,1'-binaphthyl),
- Rh(CH₃-C≡N)₂(cyclooctadiene)(BF₄),
- Rh(acac)(CH₂CH₂)₂(dppb),
- LiClO₄,
- K10 Montmorillonite clay,
- 10 Yb(OTf)₃,
- LiCo(B₉C₂H₁₁)₂,
- PdX₂,
- CrX₃,
- FeX₃,
- 15 CoX₃,
- NiX₂,
- SbX₅,
- InX₃,
- Sc(OTf)₃,
- 20 φ₃C⁺X⁻
- (R)₃SiX where R is C₁-C₄ alkyl and -φ; where X is selected from the group consisting of F⁻, Cl⁻, Br⁻, I⁻, -O-SO₂CF₃⁻, PF₆⁻, BF₄⁻, and ClO₄⁻;
- Pd(CH₃-CO-O⁻)₂;
- BF₃-diethyletherate complex;
- 25 BF₃-acetic acid complex;
- BF₃-methyl-*t*-butyl ether complex;
- BF₃-di-*n*-butyletherate complex;
- BF₃-dimethyletherate complex;
- BF₃-dimethylsulfide complex;
- 30 BF₃-phenol complex;
- BF₃-phosphoric acid complex and

BF₃-tetrahydrofuran complex. It is preferred that the Lewis acid is selected from the group consisting of BF₃, BF₃-diethyletherate complex, BF₃-acetic acid complex, BF₃-methyl-*t*-butyl ether complex, BF₃-di-*n*-butyletherate complex, BF₃-dimethyletherate complex, BF₃-dimethylsulfide complex, BF₃-phenol complex, BF₃-phosphoric acid complex and BF₃-tetrahydrofuran complex. It is more preferred that the Lewis acid is BF₃-diethyletherate. It is even more preferred that the BF₃-diethyletherate is used in the presence of C₁-C₃ alcohol and still more preferred is the use of the BF₃-diethyletherate in the presence of C₂ alcohol. Useful acids with a pK_a of < about 5 are selected from the group consisting of formic acid, acetic acid, propionic acid, benzoic acid, acid, hydrofluoric acid, fluoroboric acid, *p*-toluenesulfonic acid, methanesulfonic acid, benzenesulfonic acid, trifluoromethanesulfonic acid, perchloric acid, trifluoroacetic and trichloroacetic. It is preferred that the acid with a pK_a of < about 5 is acetic acid. When performing the transformation of the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) to the corresponding 7 α -substituted steroid (II), at least one equivalent of the reagent of formulas (A), (B) or (C) should be used, it is preferable to use from one to two equivalents. Use of additional reagent is not a problem, but rather a waste of compound. The reaction can be carried out in a variety of solvents, such as in a solvent/solvent mixture selected from the group consisting of:

C₁-C₆ alcohols,

a solvent mixture of C₁-C₆ alcohols and a solvent selected from the group consisting of acetonitrile, nitromethane, toluene, methylene chloride and acetic acid.

One factor to be considered in selecting a Lewis acid and solvent is the acid sensitivity of the 7 α -substituted steroid (II). The reaction must be performed with a Lewis acid and in a solvent where the product is stable as is known to those skilled in the art. It is preferred that the solvent be a protic solvent, one that has a pK_a of less than about 19. The reaction can be performed in a temperature range of from about -78° to about 60°; preferably in a temperature range of from about -40° to about -15°. It is more preferred to perform the reaction at about -20°. The reaction normally will take from a few hours to a day depending on the number of equivalent used and the reaction temperature.

Useful 7 α -substituted steroids (II) include those selected from the group consisting of:
17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone,

11 α ,17 β -dihydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone,

9 α ,11 α -epoxy-17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone,

5 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-t-butyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone,

11 α ,17 β -dihydroxy-7 α -(5'-t-butyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone,

11 α ,17 β -dihydroxy-7 α -(4'-bromo-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone,

10 11 α ,17 β -dihydroxy-7 α -(4'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone and

7 α -allyl-17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one, 21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone.

Rather than carrying the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) on to the next step *in situ*, it is preferred to isolate and purify the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) before performing the next step. The preferred method of purification of the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) is by crystallization. The process for purifying the 7 α -substituted steroid of formula (II) comprises crystallizing the 7 α -substituted steroid (II), which contains greater than 5% of the 7 β -isomer from a solvent selected from the group consisting of ethyl acetate, *n*-propyl acetate and butyl acetate. It is preferred to obtain the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) in greater than 99.8% isomeric purity and it is preferred that the crystallization solvent is *n*-propyl acetate. Crystallization co-solvents may be used.

The above purification of the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) results in crystalline 7 α -substituted steroid (II). However, crystalline 7 α -substituted steroid (II) can also be readily obtained from other solvents, including methylene chloride, methanol, acetonitrile, acetone, cyclohexane and iso-octane as well as solvent mixtures of these solvents or a mixture of acetonitrile with water. Crystalline 7 α -substituted steroid (II) can be readily obtained by methods well known to those skilled in the art for crystallization. For example, the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) desired to be obtained in crystalline form is dissolved in a minimal amount of a suitable solvent, the mixture is heated until all the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) is in solution and then the mixture is cooled until crystals result. Alternatively, once the 7 α -

substituted steroid (II) is in solution in a suitable solvent such as ethyl acetate, the volume of the solvent can be reduced by distillation, or by passing a stream of a dry inert gas such as nitrogen over the mixture to concentrate the 7 α -substituted steroid (II). Further, anti-solvents, such as cyclohexane or iso-octane, can be added to the warm mixture to help reduce the solubility of the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) in the solvent and promote its crystallization as is known to those skilled in the art. The preferred solvents for crystallization are those used for purification.

It has been determined by powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) that the crystals of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) regardless of which process of the invention was used to make it and regardless of what solvent(s) it is crystallized from, that only one crystal form is produced. EXAMPLEs 39-53 are PXRD analysis of different samples of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) obtained by various process and crystallized from various solvent systems. The results are substantially identical. The differences are due to the identity and amount of a particular impurity that may be present as well as residual solvent as is known to those skilled in the art. It is known to those skilled in the art that even if the same sample is subjected to PXRD on more than one occasion, that the results will not be identical. That is known as experimental error and understood by those skilled in the art. It is the overall analysis that determines whether or not two crystal forms are the same or different.

In determining the PXRD of a crystal, the particular instrument used as well as the power of the instrument will affect the results. In determining whether two samples have the same or different crystal form, a scientist will compare the location of peaks or bands and look to see if there are any new bands in either sample not present in the other. In addition, the relative intensity of the peaks is very important.

The next step in the process of CHART A, is the conversion of the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) to the corresponding *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*), by an oxidative process which comprises (1) contacting the 7 α -substituted steroid of formula (II) with an agent selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a halogenating agent in the presence of water and a base whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of > about 8,

(b) an oxygen donating agent,

(c) electrochemical oxidation,

(d) a quinone in the presence of water or

(e) nonquinone oxidants. It is preferred that the agent be a halogenating agent. Useful

5 halogenating agents include those selected from the group consisting of dibromodimethylhydantoin, dichlorodimethylhydantoin, diiododimethylhydantoin, N-chlorosuccinamide, N-bromosuccinamide, N-iodosuccinamide, trichloroisocyanuric acid, *t*-butylhypochlorite and 3-bromo-1-chloro-5,5-dimethylhydantoin; it is preferred that the halogenating is dibromodimethylhydantoin. When using a halogenating agent, the amount
10 used should be at least one equivalent of the halogenating agent; preferably from about 1.0 to about 1.05 equivalents of the halogenating agent are used. It is more preferred that the amount of halogenating agent be about 1.01 equivalents. The reason is that one equivalent is required to complete the reaction but any excess needs to be quenched. Suitable quenching agents include bisulfite, isobutylvinyl ether, 2-methylfuran and hypophosphorous acid.

15 Useful oxygen donating agents include those selected from the group consisting of:

a peracid,

singlet oxygen followed by either phosphite or thiourea,

triplet oxygen,

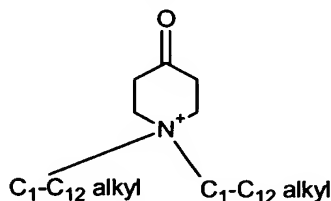
hydrogen peroxide with a ketone selected from the group consisting of Q₄-CO-Q₅

20 where Q₄ and Q₅ are the same or different and are:

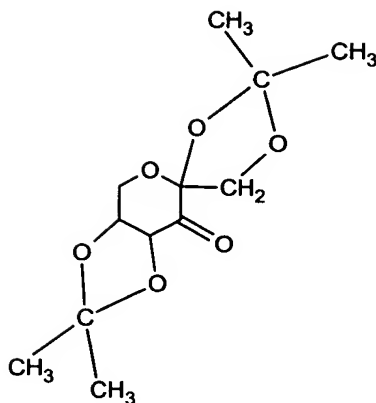
C₁-C₄ alkyl optionally substituted with 1 thru 9 -Cl or -F, and where the

Q₄ and Q₅ are taken together with the attached carbon atom to form a cyclic

ketone of 5 thru 7 members and ketones of the formula:



25 and



hydrogen peroxide in combination with methyltrioxorhenium,
 trichloroacetonitrile/hydrogen peroxide,
 5 trichloroacetamide/hydrogen peroxide,
 DDQ/water,
p-chloranil/water,

$\phi\text{-C}(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{-O-OH}$ or an alkylhydroperoxide in combination with a metal containing
 activator, where alkyl is from $\text{C}_4\text{-C}_{10}$ alkyl and metal containing activator is selected from the
 10 group consisting of $\text{Ti}(\text{isopropoxide})_4$, peroxotungstophosphate, $\text{VO}(\text{acetylacetonate})_2$ and
 MO hexacarbonyl. It is preferred that the oxygen donating agent is a peracid. Useful
 peracids include those selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) perbenzoic acid optionally substituted with 1 or 2 $-\text{Cl}$ or $-\text{NO}_2$,
- (b) percarboxylic acids of the formula $\text{C}_{n2}(\text{Q}_6)_{2n2+1}\text{-CO}_3\text{H}$ where n_2 is 1 thru 4 and Q_6
 15 is $-\text{H}$, $-\text{Cl}$ or $-\text{F}$,

(c) perphthalic acid and

(d) magnesium peroxyphthalate. An excess oxygen donating agent present must also
 be quenched as was done for the halogenating agents. Base is required to neutralize the acid
 produced during the transformation of the 7α -substituted steroid (II) to the *cis*-enedione (III-
 20 *cis*). Use bases include those selected from the group consisting of acetate, bicarbonate,
 carbonate, propionate, benzoate, dibasic phosphate and borate; it is more preferred that the
 base be acetate. For example, when the halogenating agent is dibromodimethylhydantoin,
 hydrobromic acid is produced. Hence, one equivalent of base per equivalent of acid produced

is required. In practice, a slight excess is used, about 1.5 equivalents. Suitable solvents for this reaction are those which are water miscible and which dissolves both the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) and the halogenating agent or oxygen donating agent. Acetone and THF are preferred solvents. The reaction is performed at room temperature, about 20 to about 25°.

5 The reaction takes a few hours depending on the reactivity of the oxygenating donating agent or halogenating agent. When formed, the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) does not have to be isolated and purified, but rather can be used in subsequent transformations "as is" or *in situ*. It is preferred that the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) is 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(*cis*-1',4'-dioxopent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone. Other oxidants useful for
 10 transformation of the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) to the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) include quinones (listed elsewhere). The 7 α -substituted steroid (II) is contacted with a stoichiometric amount of quinone and at least a stoichiometric amount of water in a water-miscible organic solvent. The contacting is preferably done at around room temperature. In addition, the oxidation can be accomplished by electrochemistry. The electrochemical oxidation is accomplished by
 15 contacting the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) with a sub-stoichiometric amount of a quinone (preferably DDQ) and at least a stoichiometric amount of water in an electrochemical cell using standard electrochemical techniques such as are described in US 4,270,994. Finally, the oxidation can be accomplished with non-quinone agents which include, manganic acetate, potassium permanganate, ceric ammonium nitrate, iodosobenzene, iodobenzenediacetate,
 20 iodobenzenebistrifluoroacetate, chromic acid ("Jones reagent"), and lead tetraacetate. These reactions are typically run in aqueous acetone as solvent at around room temperature (20-25°), although many water-miscible organic co-solvents can be used in place of acetone. Other oxidizing agents that effect this transformation include hydrogen peroxide or an organic hydroperoxide (listed elsewhere) in combination with a metal catalyst such as
 25 methyltrioxorhenium, palladium acetate, ruthenium trichloride, or ruthenium tetroxide. These reactions can be run in any solvent in which the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) is soluble such as methylene chloride, acetone, etc. The reactions involving ruthenium catalysts are preferably run in aqueous acetonitrile.

In the process of CHART A, the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) can be transformed to the
 30 corresponding *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*) or it can be converted to the peroxy compound (IV-OOH), the hydroxy compound (IV-OH), the biscarbonyl compound (V) or the carboxylic acid

(VI) or mixture thereof. When the term carboxylic acid (VI) is used, it refers to and includes the pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof. These will include the sodium, potassium, lithium, magnesium, tetrabutylammonium and the carboxylic acid salts with DBU, tetramethylquanidine, triethylamine and others. The identity of the particular cation is not
 5 important since eventually it is lost when forming an acid which ultimately is converted to the methyl ester (VIII) and eplerenone (IX) which requires a methyl ester at the 7 α -position. It is preferable to convert the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) to the corresponding *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*) rather than convert the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) to a mixture of peroxy (IV-OOH), hydroxy (IV-OH) and biscarbonyl (V) compounds.

10 When the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) is transformed to the corresponding *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*), the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) is contacted with an isomerization catalyst which can be either a chemical agent including:

- (a) a strong acid of pK_a of < about 2;
- (b) a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a pK_a > about 8 and
- 15 (c) salt of a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a pK_a > about 8,
- (d) I₂,
- (e) (C₁-C₄)₃P,
- (f) ϕ_3 P, or a physical agent such as
- (g) heating to about 80°.

20 It is preferred that the isomerization catalyst be a strong acid of pK_a of < about 2. When the isomerization catalyst is a strong acid of pK_a of < about 2, useful strong acids of pK_a of < about 2 include those selected from the group consisting of hydrochloric acid, hydrobromic acid, hydroiodic acid, hydrofluoric acid, sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid, nitric acid, trichloroacetic acid and trifluoroacetic acid, it is preferred that
 25 the strong acid of pK_a of < about 2 be hydrochloric acid. When the isomerization catalyst is a strong acid of pK_a of < about 2, it is preferred that it be used in anhydrous form or if used in as an aqueous mixture that the reaction be performed as a two phase system with the aqueous phase being separate. When the isomerization catalyst is a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a pK_a > about 8, useful tertiary amines whose conjugate acid has a pK_a > about 8
 30 include those selected from the group consisting of (Q₃)₃N where Q₃ is C₁-C₃ alkyl, DBU, DBN, DABCO, pyridine, *p*-dimethylaminopyridine and pyrrolidinylpyridine. When the

isomerization catalyst is salt of a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a $pK_a > \text{about } 8$, it is preferred that the salt of a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a $pK_a > \text{about } 8$ be pyridine hydrochloride. Regardless of which chemical agent is used, only a catalytic amount is required. For example, after formation of the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) just adding commercial

5 chloroform containing the usual impurity of hydrochloric acid is sufficient to effect the transformation to the corresponding *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*), see EXAMPLE 4, Part 2. The isomerization of *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) to the corresponding *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*) can be performed at 20-25° (room temperature). At room temperature, the reaction usually takes a few hours. It is necessary to monitor the course of the reaction by standard methods such as

10 LC or TLC to ensure that it does not go too long. If the reaction goes too long, the reaction reforms the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) with a Δ^6 -double bond. Once the reaction has proceeded to completeness where it is desirous to terminate the reaction, the reaction can be terminated as follows. When the isomerization catalyst is an acid or salt of a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of > 8 , one can terminate the reaction by washing with water.

15 If aqueous acid is used as the isomerization catalyst, it is best to separate the phases and then wash the non-aqueous phase with water. If the isomerization catalyst is a tertiary amine whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of > 8 , then the reaction mixture is washed with aqueous acid followed by water. The *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*) can be isolated and purified, however it is preferred not to isolate and purify it but rather carry it on *in situ*.

20 In the process of CHART A, the next step is the conversion of either the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) or *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*), or mixture thereof, to the corresponding hydroperoxy (IV-OOH) compound, hydroxy (IV-OH) compound, biscarbonyl (V) compound and/or the carboxylic acid (VI) or mixtures thereof. The *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) or *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*), or mixture thereof, is transformed to the corresponding hydroxy compound, peroxy

25 compound (IV-OOH), or biscarbonyl compound (V) or carboxylic (VI) by contacting the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) or *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*) or a mixture thereof, with ozone in the presence of an alcohol of the formula $R_{7.2}\text{-OH}$ where $R_{7.2}$ is -H or $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl optionally substituted with one or two -OH . This includes water, methanol, ethanol, propyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, ethylene glycol, glycerol, etc. It is preferred that $R_{7.2}$ is -H , C_1 or is iso-

30 C_3 ; it is more preferred that $R_{7.2}$ is a mixture of -H , C_1 and iso- C_3 . This means a mixture of water, methanol and isopropanol is the preferred $R_{7.2}\text{-OH}$. The steroidal starting materials

must be in solution using a solvent that will dissolve them at the cold temperatures at which it is preferred to perform this reaction. Methylene chloride is the preferred solvent. The reaction temperatures can be as low as about -100° up to about 40° . It is preferred that the temperature be from about -78° to about -20° ; it is more preferred that the temperature be about -50° . The lower the temperature, the more selectivity; the higher the temperature the less selectivity. Hence, the actual temperature used will depend on the particular reactants used and the degree of selectivity desired. The reaction is permitted to run until the starting material is reduced to a small amount. The ozone must be stopped when the starting material is consumed or the ozone will destroy the product by reacting with the Δ^4 - and/or $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -

double bonds if present. The alcohol, R_{7-2} -OH, is used in a large excess to efficiently trap the carbonyl oxide intermediate produced. Further, the reaction temperature, the time the reaction is permitted to run and the nature of the particular alcohol, R_{7-2} -OH, determines the identity of the product or if more than one product is produced, the ratio of products. If the alcohol, R_{7-2} -OH, has a hindered R_{7-2} group, then the product is more likely to be the biscarbonyl compound (V), all other things being equal. Similarly, if the alcohol, R_{7-2} -OH, does not have a hindered R_{7-2} group, such as methyl, then the product is more likely to be the hydroxy compound (IV-OH), all other things being equal. The preferred product produced by the oxidation process is the carboxylic acid (VI).

The hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) can be converted to the corresponding hydroxy compound (IV-OH) by contacting the hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) with a hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent. It is preferred to use a mild hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent, one which both deoxygenates, and second does not add to the steroid molecule. Useful hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agents include those selected from the group consisting of:

Q_1Q_2S where Q_1 and Q_2 are the same or different and are C_1 - C_4 alkyl or phenyl,

bisulfite,

sulfite,

thiosulfate,

tetrahydrothiophene,

hydrosulfite,

thiourea,

butyl vinyl ether,

(C₁-C₄ alkyl)₃ phosphine,

triphenylphosphine, and

tetramethylethylene. It is preferred that the hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent is dimethylsulfide. When the hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent is bisulfite and sulfite, sodium and potassium are the preferred cations. One equivalent of the hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent is required, but more than one equivalent, such as about two equivalents, are normally used to ensure that all of the hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) is reduced. The reaction is performed at 20-25° and is usually complete in about 1 hour. The hydroxy compound (IV-OH) can be isolated and purified if desired, however, it is preferable to carry it on *in situ* without isolating or purifying it. It is preferred that the hydroxy compound (IV) is 17β-hydroxy-7α-(1'-oxo-2'-isopropoxy-2'-hydroxy-ethyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone.

The hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) can be transformed to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI) by contacting the hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) with a carboxylic acid forming agent selected from the group consisting of:

(a) heat,

(b) a base whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of about 5 or above,

(c) an acid which has a pK_a of less than about 3,

(d) an acylating agent. When the carboxylic acid forming agent is (a) heat, the reaction mixture should be heated to the range of from about 30° to about 120°; preferably from about 80° to about 90°. When the carboxylic acid forming agent is, (b) a base whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of about 5 or above, useful bases include inorganic bases selected from the group consisting of hydroxide, bicarbonate, and carbonate and organic bases selected from the group consisting of (Q₃)₃N where Q₃ is C₁-C₃ alkyl, DBU, DBN, DABCO, pyridine and *p*-dimethylaminopyridine. It is preferred that the base is bicarbonate. Sufficient base is necessary to neutralize the steroid acid produced and any additional acid by-products. When the carboxylic acid forming agent is, (c) an acid which has a pK_a of less than about 3, useful acids include those selected from the group consisting of hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid, nitric acid and organic acids of the formula of R_{acid-1}-COOH where R_{acid-1} is -H and C₁-C₃ alkyl optionally substituted with 1 thru 3 -Cl and -F; preferred are formic acid and trifluoroacetic acid. While catalytic amounts of acid are sufficient, several

equivalent are preferred. When the carboxylic acid forming agent is, (d) an acylating agent, useful acylating agents are selected from the group consisting of $R_{\text{acid-2}}\text{-CO-O-CO-}R_{\text{acid-2}}$ where $R_{\text{acid-2}}$ is

-H,

5 $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl optionally substituted with 1 thru 3 -Cl and -F and

-φ. It is preferred that acylating agent is acetic anhydride or trifluoroacetic anhydride.

One equivalent of the acylating agent is required. When using an acylating agent, it is preferred to use it with an acylation catalyst. Preferred acylation catalysts are pyridine and *p*-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP). With regard to solvents, it is important to perform the
 10 process under homogenous reaction conditions to avoid decomposition of the hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH). This means using one phase conditions. Therefore, the solvent of choice will depend on the carboxylic acid forming agent used. If the carboxylic acid forming agent requires water to dissolve the reagent such as when the carboxylic acid forming agent is bicarbonate, then a water miscible organic solvent such as acetone, methanol, DMF or
 15 isopropanol is required. If the carboxylic acid forming agent is pyridine then the organic solvent can be a water immiscible organic solvent such as acetonitrile, methylene chloride or ethyl acetate. Hence, the selection of the solvent depends on the nature of the carboxylic acid forming agent used as is known to those skilled in the art. With the exception of the carboxylic acid forming agent (a) heat, the other acid forming agents (b), (c) and (d) can all be
 20 reacted at 20-25°. The reaction is quite fast and is usually over in less than one hour.

Both the hydroxy compound (IV-OH) and the biscarbonyl compound (V) are converted to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI) in the same manner. The process involves contacting the hydroxy compound (IV-OH) or the biscarbonyl compound (V), or mixture thereof, with an oxidatively cleaving agent. Useful oxidatively cleaving agents are
 25 selected from the group consisting of:

(1) hydrogen peroxide with a carboxylic acid forming agent selected from the group consisting of:

(a) heat,

(b) a base whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of about 5 or above,

30 (c) an acid which has a pK_a of less than about 3,

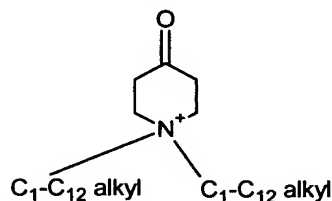
(d) an acylating agent and an acylation catalyst;

(2) KHSO_5 ;

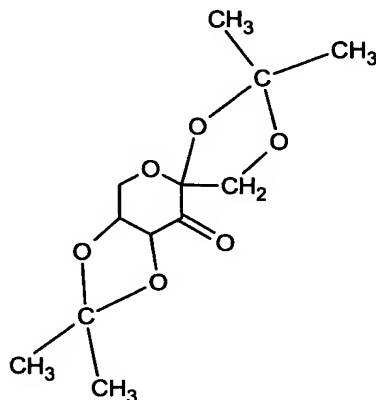
(3) hydrogen peroxide with a ketone selected from the group consisting of $\text{Q}_4\text{-CO-Q}_5$ where Q_4 and Q_5 are the same or different and are:

$\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl optionally substituted with 1 thru 9 $-\text{Cl}$ or $-\text{F}$,

5 where the Q_4 and Q_5 are taken together with the attached carbon atom to form a cyclic ketone of 5 thru 7 members, and ketones of the formula:



and



10

(4) hydrogen peroxide in combination with methyltrioxorhenium,

(5) $\phi\text{-C}(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{-O-OH}$ or an alkylhydroperoxide in combination with a metal containing activator, where alkyl is from $\text{C}_4\text{-C}_{10}$ alkyl and metal containing activator is selected from the group consisting of $\text{Ti}(\text{isopropoxide})_4$, peroxotungstophosphate,

15 $\text{VO}(\text{acetylacetonate})_2$ and Mo hexacarbonyl;

(6) peracids selected from the group consisting of

(a) perbenzoic acid optionally substituted with 1 or 2 $-\text{Cl}$ or $-\text{NO}_2$,

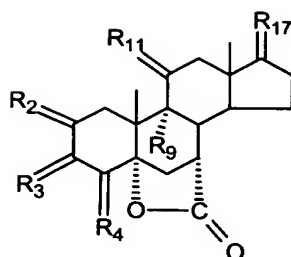
(b) percarboxylic acids of the formula $\text{C}_{n2}(\text{Q}_6)_{2n2+1}\text{-CO}_3\text{H}$ where n_2 is 1 thru 4 and Q_6 is $-\text{H}$, $-\text{Cl}$ or $-\text{F}$,

20

(c) perphthalic acid,

(d) magnesium peroxyphthalate. It is preferred that the oxidatively cleaving agent is hydrogen peroxide with a carboxylic acid forming agent. When the carboxylic acid forming agents are (a) heat, (b) a base whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of about 5 or above, (c) an acid which has a pK_a of less than about 3 or (d) an acylating agent and an acylation catalyst, they should be used in the same manner as discussed above for the transformation of the hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI). As stated above, one equivalent of the oxidatively cleaving agent is required. Two equivalents are normally used and the reaction is monitored so that when the reaction nears completion it is stopped, or quenched, and worked up before the oxidatively cleaving agent attacks the Δ^4 - and/or $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -steroid double bonds. Hydrogen peroxide and bicarbonate are preferred as the oxidatively cleaving agent. With regard to solvents it is important to perform the process under homogenous reaction conditions, meaning one phase conditions. Therefore, the solvent of choice will depend on the oxidatively cleaving agent used. If the carboxylic acid forming agent requires water to dissolve the reagent such as when the carboxylic acid forming agent is bicarbonate, then a water miscible organic solvent such as acetone, DMF, methanol or isopropanol is required. If the carboxylic acid forming agent is pyridine then the organic solvent can be a water immiscible organic solvent such as acetonitrile, methylene chloride or ethyl acetate. Hence, the selection of the solvent depends on the nature of the carboxylic acid forming agent used as is known to those skilled in the art. With the exception of the carboxylic acid forming agent (a) heat, the other acid forming agents (b), (c) and (d) can all be reacted at 20-25°. The reaction is quite fast and is usually over in less than one hour. If the reaction mixture contains some hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH), then it is useful to first treat the reaction mixture with a hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent. It is preferred that the hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent is dimethylsulfide.

There are a number of processes to transform a carboxylic acid (VI) to the corresponding 5,7-lactone (VII), where the C- and D-rings of the starting carboxylic acid (VI) and product 5,7-lactone are the same. The processes differ depending on the nature of the steroid A-/B-rings of the starting carboxylic acid (VI). They use different reactants and produce 5,7-lactones (VII) with different steroid A-/B-rings. One of these processes produces a 5,7-lactone of formula (VII)



(VII)

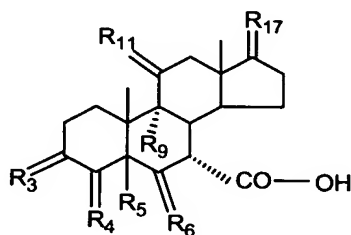
where

(Va) R_2 is $-H$; R_3 is $=O$; R_4 is $-H$;

(Vb) R_2 is $-H$; R_3 is $R_{3a}:R_{3b}$ where both R_{3a} and R_{3b} are $-OH$ and R_4 is $-H$;

where R_9 , R_{11} and R_{11} are as defined above, which comprises:

(1) contacting a carboxylic acid of formula (VI)



(VI)

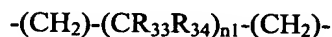
where

(I) R_3 is $=O$; R_4 is $R_{4-1}:R_{4-2}$ where one of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is $-H$ and the other of R_{4-1} and R_{4-2} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R_6 is $-H$;

(III) R_3 is $\alpha-R_{3-5}:\beta-R_{3-6}$ where R_{3-5} is $-O-R_{31}$ and R_{3-6} is $-O-R_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of

C_1-C_3 alkyl and

R_{31} and R_{32} are taken with the attached $-O-C-O-$ to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the formula



where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are $-H$ and C_1-C_3 alkyl; R_4 is

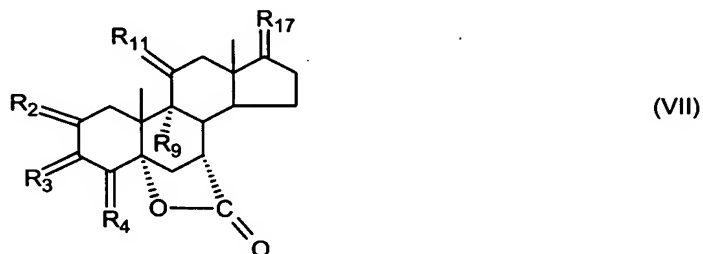
–H:–H; R₆ is R₆₋₅:R₆₋₆ where one of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R₆₋₅ and R₆₋₆ is –H;

(IV) R₃ is α -R₃₋₇: β -R₃₋₈ where R₃₋₇ is –O-R₃₁ and R₃₋₈ is –O-R₃₂ where R₃₁ and R₃₂ are as defined above; R₄ is R₄₋₇:R₄₋₈ where one of R₄₋₇ and R₄₋₈ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R₄₋₇ and R₄₋₈ is –H; R₆ is –H:–H;

where R₉, R₁₁ and R₁₇ are as defined above; with a reaction medium which has a pH of less than about 5. The conversion of the carboxylic acid (VI) to the corresponding 5,7-lactone (VII) is an equilibrium reaction. The lower the pH used for the reaction medium the more the equilibrium shifts toward the 5,7-lactone (VII), hence the desire to keep the pH less than 5 and preferably in the range of 1 thru 5. It is preferred to perform the reaction under anhydrous conditions; under anhydrous conditions it is preferred that the acid be a strong acid of pK_a less than about 2. Useful strong acids include those selected from the group consisting of fluorosulfonic, chlorosulfonic, benzenesulfonic, *p*-toluenesulfonic, methanesulfonic, trifluoromethanesulfonic, trifluoroacetic, trichloroacetic, hydrochloric, sulfuric, phosphoric and nitric; it is preferred that the acid is benzenesulfonic, *p*-toluenesulfonic or methanesulfonic acid. Alternatively, the process can be performed using aqueous acid as the catalyst. Under these conditions it is preferred to perform the process in a two-phase system. The amount of acid used is not very important and can be present in an amount from catalytic to excess. Bases are also operable to catalyze the reaction of the carboxylic acid (VI) to the corresponding 5,7-lactone (VII) as long as they are used in a catalytic amount. Useful bases include those selected from the group consisting of hydroxide, bicarbonate, carbonate, DBU, DBN, DABCO, pyridine, *p*-dimethylaminopyridine, Q₇-COO[–] where Q₇ is –H, C₁-C₃ alkyl or – ϕ , (Q₃)₃N where Q₃ is C₁-C₃ alkyl; preferred are hydroxide, bicarbonate, carbonate, triethylamine or pyridine. The solvents for the transformation of the carboxylic acid (VI) to the corresponding 5,7-lactone (VII) are helpful in effecting the equilibrium of the reaction. It is preferred to use a solvent in which the starting carboxylic acid (VI) is soluble and in which the 5,7-lactone (VII) is not soluble. That way the 5,7-lactone (VII) precipitates out as it is formed pushing the equilibrium towards the desired 5,7-lactone (VII). A preferred solvent is acetone. This reaction is performed from about 0° to

about 25° and is complete in a few hours. Depending on the pH of the reaction medium and solvent used, ratios of < 95/5 of carboxylic acid (VI)/5,7-lactone (VII) are obtained. Since this process step is an equilibrium reaction, the pH of the reaction medium helps control the final position of the equilibrium as is known to those skilled in the art.

5 A second process for producing a 5,7-lactone of formula (VII)

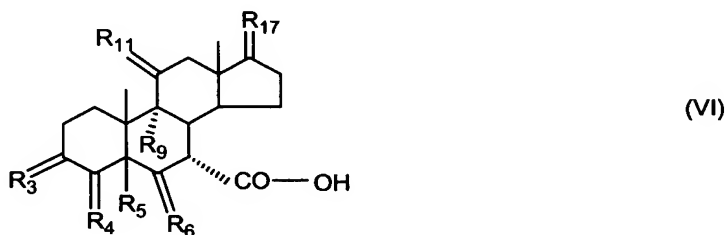


where

(Va) R₂ is -H:-H, R₃ is =O and R₄ is -H:-H;

where R₉, R₁₁ and R₁₇ are as defined above, comprises:

10 (1) contacting a carboxylic acid of formula (VI)



where

(I) R₃ is =O; R₄ is R₄₋₁:R₄₋₂ where one of R₄₋₁ and R₄₋₂ is -H and the other of R₄₋₁ and R₄₋₂ is taken together with R₅ to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R₆ is -H:-H;

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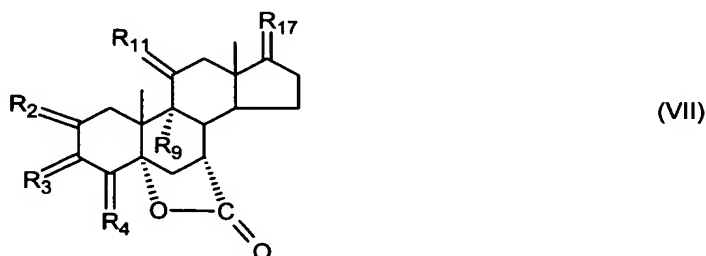
where R₉, R₁₁ and R₁₇ are as defined above; under anhydrous conditions with an anhydrous reaction medium of pH less than about 5. It is preferred that the reaction medium contains an acid which has a pK_a of < about 4. Useful acids which have a pK_a of < about 4 include those selected from the group consisting of fluorosulfonic, chlorosulfonic, benzenesulfonic, *p*-toluenesulfonic, methanesulfonic, trifluoromethanesulfonic,

20

trifluoroacetic, trichloroacetic, hydrochloric, sulfuric, phosphoric and nitric. It is preferred that the acid is benzenesulfonic, *p*-toluenesulfonic or methanesulfonic. It is also preferred that the carboxylic acid (VI) is reacted with the acid in a two-phase system. The process also includes reacting the carboxylic acid (VI) with a catalytic amount of base. Useful bases

5 include those selected from the group consisting of hydroxide, bicarbonate, carbonate, DBU, DBN, DABCO, pyridine, *p*-dimethylaminopyridine, $Q_7\text{-COO}^-$ where Q_7 is $-\text{H}$, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl or $-\phi$, $(Q_3)_3\text{N}$ where Q_3 is $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl.

A third process for producing a 5,7-lactone of formula (VII)



10 where

(Vc) R_2 is $-\text{H}$; R_3 is $-\text{O}-R_{3a}-\text{O}-R_{3b}$ where R_{3a} and R_{3b} the same and are $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl or where R_{3a} and R_{3b} are taken together with the attached $-\text{O}-\text{C}-\text{O}-$ to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the formula



15 where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are $-\text{H}$ and $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_3$ alkyl, and R_4 is $-\text{H}$; $-\text{H}$;

(VI) R_2 is $-\text{H}$; R_3 is $R_{3c}:R_{3d}$ and R_4 is $R_{4c}:R_{4d}$ where one of R_{3c} and R_{3d} is taken with one of R_{4c} or R_{4d} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{3c} and R_{3d} is $\text{CH}_3\text{-O-}$ or $\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{-O-}$;

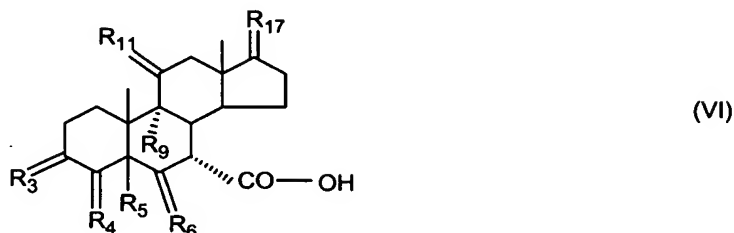
20 and the other of R_{4c} and R_{4d} is $-\text{H}$; or

(VII) R_2 is $R_{2e}:R_{2f}$ and R_3 is $R_{3e}:R_{3f}$ where one of R_{2e} and R_{2f} is taken with one of R_{3e} or R_{3f} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{2e} and R_{2f} is $-\text{H}$, and the other of R_{3e} and R_{3f} is $\text{CH}_3\text{-O-}$ or $\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{-O-}$; or mixtures thereof;

25

where R_9 , R_{11} and R_{17} are as defined above, comprises:

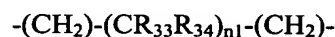
(1) contacting a carboxylic acid of formula (VI)



where

(III) R_3 is α - R_{3-5} : β - R_{3-6} where R_{3-5} is $-O-R_{31}$ and R_{3-6} is $-O-R_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of C_1 - C_3 alkyl and

R_{31} and R_{32} are taken with the attached $-O-C-O-$ to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the formula



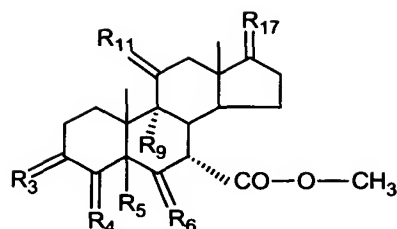
where n_1 is 0 or 1;

where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are $-H$ and C_1 - C_3 alkyl; R_4 is $-H$: $-H$; R_6 is R_{6-5} : R_{6-6} where one of R_{6-5} and R_{6-6} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{6-5} and R_{6-6} is $-H$;

(IV) R_3 is α - R_{3-7} : β - R_{3-8} where R_{3-7} is $-O-R_{31}$ and R_{3-8} is $-O-R_{32}$ where R_{31} and R_{32} are as defined above; R_4 is R_{4-7} : R_{4-8} where one of R_{4-7} and R_{4-8} is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of R_{4-7} and R_{4-8} is $-H$; R_6 is $-H$: $-H$;

where R_9 , R_{11} and R_{17} are as defined above; with at least a catalytic amount of acid. It is preferred that the acid have a pK_a of $<$ about 4 and are as discussed above.

The present invention includes a process for the preparation of a methyl ester of formula (VIII)



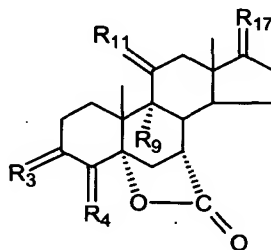
(VIII)

where

(I) R_3 is = O; R_4 is $R_{4.1}:R_{4.2}$ where one of $R_{4.1}$ and $R_{4.2}$ is -H and the other of $R_{4.1}$ and $R_{4.2}$ is taken together with R_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached; R_6 is -H:-H;

where R_9 , R_{11} and R_{17} are as defined above, which comprises:

(1) contacting a 5,7-lactone of the formula (VII)



(VII)

where R_4 is -H:-H and where R_3 , R_9 , R_{11} and R_{17} are defined above, with base, and

(2) contacting the reaction mixture of step (1) with a methylating agent.

The base needs to be strong enough to open the 5,7-lactone (VII) but of the type that will not react with the methylating agent, a weak nucleophile. Useful bases include those selected from the group consisting of bicarbonate, carbonate, hydroxide and $R_{base}O^-$ where R_{base} is C_1 - C_4 alkyl. It is preferred that the base is bicarbonate. The amount of base required is from about 1 to about 1.5 equivalents. Useful methylating agents include those selected from the group consisting of dimethylsulfate, methyl iodide, methyl bromide, trimethylphosphate, dimethylcarbonate and methyl chloroformate; preferred is dimethylsulfate. The amount of methylating agent used should be the same as the number of equivalents of base used or a very slight excess over that. The preferred method of the process is to react it in a sequential manner in a two-step reaction with base first and then the methylating agent. If the reaction is performed all in one step, the base reacts with the methylating reagent necessitating the need for more base and more methylating agent. The more efficient way is to first react the 5,7-

lactone (VII) with at least one equivalent of base, preferably from about 1 to about 1.5 equivalents and then to react the salt of the carboxylate acid (VI) which is formed with the methylating agent. The solvent used will depend on the nature of the base used. If it is water soluble, such as bicarbonate or hydroxide, then a mixture of water and a water miscible
5 organic solvent is preferred. These water miscible organic solvents include, methanol, ethanol, isopropanol, acetone, THF and DMF. If the base is water soluble and the solvent is a mixture of water and a water immiscible solvent, then a phase transfer catalyst, such as tetrabutylammonium bisulfate or tributylmethylammonium chloride is used. If the base is soluble in a water immiscible organic solvent, one that will also dissolve the 5,7-lactone
10 (VII), then a water-immiscible organic solvent is suitable. The reaction temperature is dependent on the reactivity of the methylating agent. If an agent such as dimethylcarbonate is used the reaction will go slow and heat up to about 150° may be necessary. On the other hand, if a more reactive agent such as dimethylsulfate is used the reaction goes in about 1 hour at 40°. While in theory one equivalent of base and one equivalent of methylating agent
15 should be sufficient, in practice more than one equivalent is needed for the optimum reaction conditions.

The 5,7-lactone (VII) can be transformed to the (salt of the) corresponding carboxylic acid (VI) by contacting the 5,7-lactone of formula (VII), with a reaction medium which as a pH > 7. The reaction is similar to the transformation of the 5,7-lactone (VII) to the methyl
20 ester (VIII) except that no methylating agent is used. Since only base is used, the product produced is the salt of the carboxylic acid (VI). Further, since no methylating agent is present, the amount of base used is not critical. If the acid form of the carboxylic acid (VI), is desired the salt form can be acidified to produced the corresponding acid form of the carboxylic acid (VI) as is known to those skilled in the art.

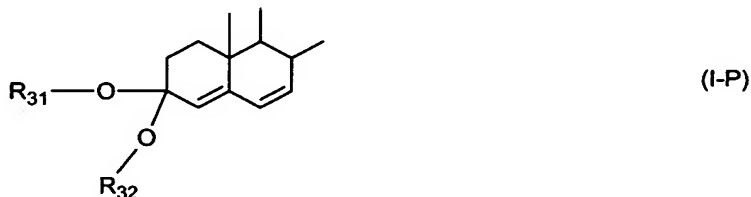
25 There are numerous alternative routes using the present invention as set forth in CHART A as will be explained below and is known to those skilled in the art. For example, the steroid A-ring can be protected, as compound (I-P), see CHART B and the explanation below, during the transformation of (I) to (II) or used in the unprotected form (I). Further, the C- and D-rings can have a variety of functionality during the various steps of the process.
30 The C-ring functionality includes, for example, 9 α -hydroxy, 9 α -O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP), 9 α -F, 11-keto, 11-saturated, 11 α -hydroxy, 11 α -O-(HYDROXY

PROTECTING GROUP), 11 β -hydroxy, 11 β -O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP), $\Delta^{9(11)}$ - and 9 α ,11 α -epoxy. The D-ring functionality includes, for example, 17-keto, 17 β -hydroxy, 17 α -ethynyl-17 β -hydroxy, 17 α -cyano-17 β -hydroxy, 17 α -C \equiv C-CH₂-O-(-H or substitutedsilyl)-17 β -OH, 17 α -C \equiv C-CH₂-O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP)-17 β -OH, 17 α -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-OH-17 β -OH, 17 α -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-O-(HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUP)-17 β -OH, 17 α -hydroxy-17 β -CO-CH₃, 17 β -CO-CH₂-OH, 17 β -CO-CH₂-O-CO-(CH₂)₀₋₃-CH₃; 17 β -O-CH₂-17 α resulting in a three member epoxide, γ -lactone and -O-CH(OR₁₇₋₉)-CH₂-CH₂..... where the bond from the oxygen (-O) is one of the four bonds at C-17 in the β -configuration and the bond from the methylene group (CH₂.....) is another of the four bonds at C-17 in the α -configuration to form a 5 member heterocycle containing one oxygen atom, where R₁₇₋₉ is -H or C₁-C₃ alkyl. However, the D-ring functionality for the compounds of the processes of claims 539, 548 and 556 does not include R₁₇₋₂ being hydroxyl. HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUPs are well known to those skilled in the art. The same HYDROXY PROTECTING GROUPs are operable at C-9, C-11 and C-17 and are selected from the group consisting of: -Si(-CH₃)₃, -Si(-CH₂-CH₃)₃, -CO-CH₃, -CO-H and -SiH(CH₃)₂.

At some point the A-ring, if it is not already the required Δ^4 -3-keto functionality, must be transformed to the Δ^4 -3-keto functionality. Likewise, with the C-ring, if it is not already the required 9 α ,11 α -epoxide functionality, it must be transformed to the 9 α ,11 α -epoxide. Similarly, if the D-ring is not already the required γ -lactone, it must be transformed to the γ -lactone. However, those transformations can take place either before, during or after various other processes and/or steps of CHART A. It is preferred to start with the A-ring with Δ^4 -3-keto functionality, the C-ring with $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -functionality and the D-ring as the γ -lactone. With regard to the C-ring, it is preferred to maintain the $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -functionality throughout the process of the invention until the -CO-O-CH₃ group is fully synthesized at the 7 α -position and then transform the $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -functionality to the corresponding 9 α ,11 α -epoxide. With regard to the C-ring one could start with a 11-keto functionality and at some point in the process reduce it to the 11 α -hydroxy functionality and then at some later point dehydrate the 11 α -hydroxy functionality to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -olefin functionality by either the processes of EXAMPLEs 18-20 using PCl₅ or by the process of EXAMPLE 31 using N-(1,1,2,2,3,3,3)hexafluoropropyldiethyl-amine which is known as Ishikawa reagent. There is a thorough

discussion below as to how the dehydration of an 11 α -hydroxy steroid should be performed using the Ishakawa reagent to produce the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -olefin. If the dehydration of the 11 α -hydroxy to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -olefin takes place with a 5'-methyl-2'-furyl substituent at C-7 α , with a formula (II) compound, it appears PCl₅ is preferred, but if the dehydration takes place on the methyl ester (VII), then the Ishikawa reagent is preferred. The $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -olefin is then converted to the desired 9 α ,11 α -epoxide functionality by means well known to those skilled in the art. Likewise, with regard to the D-ring, one need not start with the γ -lactone in the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) starting material. One could start with 17-keto or 17 β -hydroxy, etc and then at a desired point convert the starting D-ring 17-
 10 functionality to the desired γ -lactone. The preferred process including what functionality is desired to start with, and where the conversions are made, is set forth in CHART E. In short, it is desired to start with the same functionality as is desired in the end product for the A-ring and D-rings. It is preferred to start with the C-ring having the $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -olefin functionality which is transformed to the desired 9 α ,11 α -epoxide functionality after the 7 α -substituent is
 15 finalized as -CO-O-CH₃. However, as explained above and is known to those skilled in the art, there are numerous alternative ways of preparing eplerenone by the process of CHART A starting with different functionality in the A-, C- and D-rings.

CHART B discloses a process to produce the protected $\Delta^{4,6}$ -ketal steroid (I-P), from the corresponding $\Delta^{3,5}$ -3-alkyl enol ethers which are readily available from the corresponding Δ^4 -3-keto steroids by processes known to those skilled in the art. It is preferred use the unprotected $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid (I) as the starting material in the process of CHART A. However, steroidal $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-ketals (I-P) can also be used as the starting material of the process of CHART A. In the process of CHART B, the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-ketal steroid (I-P)



25 where R₃₁ and R₃₂

(1) the same or different and are C₁-C₃ alkyl, and

(2) taken with the attached —O—C—O— to form a cyclic ketal of 5 or 6 atoms of the formula



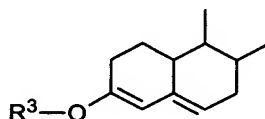
where n_1 is 0 or 1;

5 where R_{33} and R_{34} are the same or different and are

—H,

$\text{C}_1\text{—C}_3$ alkyl,

is produced from the corresponding $\Delta^{3,5}$ -3-alkyl enol ether



(Alkyl enol ether)

10 where R^3 is

$\text{C}_1\text{—C}_3$ alkyl,

$\text{CH}_3\text{—CO—,}$

$\Phi\text{—CO—}$ or

$\text{R}_{\text{Si-1}}\text{R}_{\text{Si-2}}\text{R}_{\text{Si-3}}\text{Si—}$ where $R_{\text{Si-1}}$, $R_{\text{Si-2}}$ and $R_{\text{Si-3}}$ are the same or different and are $\text{C}_1\text{—C}_4$

15 alkyl; by contacting the $\Delta^{3,5}$ -3-alkyl enol ether (Alkyl enol ether) with a hydride abstractor and an alcohol selected from the group consisting of alcohols of the formula:

(a) $\text{R}_{31}\text{—OH,}$ where R_{31} is as defined above,

(b) $\text{R}_{32}\text{—OH,}$ where R_{32} is as defined above,

(c) $\text{HO—(CH}_2\text{)—(CR}_{33}\text{R}_{34}\text{)}_{n_1}\text{—(CH}_2\text{)—OH}$ where n_1 , R_{33} and R_{34} are as defined above,

20 (d) $\text{HO—CH}_2\text{—CH}_2\text{—OH,}$ by (1) contacting the $\Delta^{3,5}$ -3-enol ether (3-alkyl enol ether).

Useful hydride abstractors include those selected from the group consisting of

DDQ,

p-chloranil,

o-chloranil,

25 Mn^{+3} , Mn^{+7} , Pb^{+4} , Pd^{+2} , Ru^{+8} , Cr^{+6} ,

o-iodoxybenzoic acid,

o-iodoxybenzoic acid complex with DMSO,

o-iodoxybenzoic acid complex with

4-methoxypyridine-N-oxide,

N-methylmorpholine-N-oxide,
 trimethylamine-N-oxide,
 iodic acid (HIO_3),
 iodine pentoxide (I_2O_5),
 5 ceric ammonium nitrate,
 iodosobenzene,
 iodobenzenebistrifluoroacetate,
 iodobenzenediacetate,
 tritylfluoroborate, and by electrochemical oxidation with a catalytic amount of a
 10 hydride abstractor. It is preferred that the hydride abstractor is *p*-chloranil or DDQ, more
 preferably DDQ. One equivalent of the hydride abstractor is required; more is not harmful,
 just wasteful. It is preferred that the alcohol is neopentylglycol also known as
 dimethylpropyleneglycol or 2,2-dimethyl-1,3-propanediol. The solvent needs to dissolve the
 3-alkyl enol ether (3-alkyl enol ether) starting material. Suitable solvents include methylene
 15 chloride, acetonitrile, THF, and the like. The reaction is operable in the temperature range
 of about -78° to about 40° , preferred is about -15° . The reaction is very rapid and is
 complete in a few minutes at -15° . The entire process is preferably performed under
 essentially anhydrous conditions. The term "hydride abstractor" as used herein means the
 reagent effects the net removal of one of the hydrogen atoms at C-7 of the 3-dienol ether, and
 20 does not imply any mechanism by which this removal occurs. It is preferred that the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -
 ketal (I-P) is selected from the group consisting of

17 β -hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone, cyclic 3-
 (2',2'-dimethyl-1',3'-propanediyl ketal),

17 β -hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone, cyclic 3-
 25 ethanediyl ketal.

CHART C discloses that the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) can also be transformed to the
 corresponding *cis*-oxyenedione (X-*cis*) by (1) contacting the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) with
 ozone in the presence of a C₁-C₄ alcohol and (2) contacting the mixture of step (1) with a
 hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent. The preferences for R₇₋₁, X₁, R_b, R_c, R_d and the other
 30 variable substituents are as set forth above as previously stated. The 7 α -substituted steroid
 (II) is dissolved in a suitable C₁-C₄ alcohol, or mixture thereof. It is preferred that the C₁-C₄

alcohol is a C₁ and C₃ alcohols; it is more preferred the alcohol is a C₁ alcohol. Cosolvents such as methylene chloride can also be used if necessary. The nature of the solvent/co-solvent is not critical as long as it will dissolve the reactants at the cold temperature at which the process is performed. The nature of the alcohol is not critical as it is eventually lost from the steroid molecule. The reaction temperatures can be as low as about -100° up to about 40°. It is preferred that the temperature be from about -78° to about -20°; it is more preferred that the temperature be about -50°. Ozone is passed thru the reaction mixture as is known to those skilled in the art until the process of step (1) is complete. The course of the reaction is monitored as is known those skilled in the art. When the reaction of step (1) is complete, the reaction mixture of step (1) is contacted with a hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent. It is preferred that the hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent is trimethylphosphite. It is realized that for other processes of this invention the preferred hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent was dimethylsulfide, but here the preferred agent is trimethylphosphite. The reaction mixture is then slowly permitted to warm to 20-25°. The reaction will proceed rapidly when it reaches the correct temperature for the particular 7 α -substituted steroid (II). The *cis*-oxyenedione (X-*cis*) product can be carried along without isolation and purification if desired.

CHART C further discloses that the *cis*-oxyenedione (X-*cis*) can be transformed to the corresponding *trans*-oxyenedione (X-*trans*). The process is performed in the same manner and same way that the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*), of CHART A, was transformed to the corresponding *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*).

The *cis*-oxyenedione (X-*cis*) or the *trans*-oxyenedione (X-*trans*), or a mixture thereof, can be transformed to the corresponding hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH), and/or hydroxy compound (IV-OH), and/or biscarbonyl compound (V) and/or carboxylic acid (VI) or mixture thereof in the same manner and same way as the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*) or the *trans*-enedione (III-*trans*), or a mixture thereof, was transformed to the corresponding hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH), and/or hydroxy compound (IV-OH), and/or biscarbonyl compound (V) and/or carboxylic acid (X) or mixture thereof. The hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH), and/or hydroxy compound (IV-OH), and/or biscarbonyl compound (V) and/or carboxylic acid (X) or mixture thereof are then transformed to eplrenone (IX) in the same manner and same was as previously discussed for the process of CHART A.

The *cis*-oxyenedione (X-*cis*) or the *trans*-oxyenedione (X-*trans*), or a mixture thereof, can be transformed to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI) by reaction with an oxidatively cleaving agent in the same manner and same way as the hydroxy compound (IV-OH), and/or biscarbonyl compound (V) are transformed to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI).

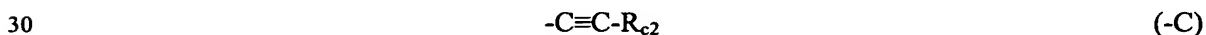
5 CHART D sets forth the preferred process of the invention (when R_{7,1} is -A1) with regard to the steroid A-/B-ring, that the steroid A-ring is not protected. However, given the different variable substituents of the steroid C- and D-rings and combinations of variable substituents possible, in some cases it may be preferred to protect the steroid A-ring as would be apparent to one skilled in the art. But in general, it is preferred that the steroid A-ring not
10 be protected and the preferred process be that of CHART D.

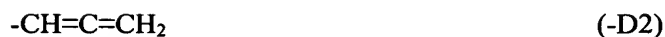
CHART E sets forth the preferred process of the invention with the preferred variable substituents for each intermediate for the conversion of the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid (I) to eplerenone (IX).

15 CHART F discloses the reversible nature of the conversion of the carboxylic acid (VI) with the 5,7-lactone (VII).

CHART G discloses the general process of the invention when the adduct -R_{7,1} is the cyclic adduct (-A2). The 7 α -substituted steroid (II) is formed in the same manner as discussed above for CHART A when the adduct is (-A1). Then the 7 α -substituted steroid (II) where R_{7,1} is (-A2) is reacted in the same way, with the same reagents as used in CHART
20 A for (-A1) to give intermediates of the same type as the intermediates of CHART A for adduct (-A1). The processes of CHARTs A and G are analogous, the reactants are the same and used in the same order. The intermediates produced are either isomers or homologs of each other.

25 CHART H discloses the general process of the invention when the adduct R_{7,1} is (-B), (-C), (-D1), (-D2) and (-D3). The process of CHART H is a two step process. The first step of the process is to transform the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) starting material to the corresponding 7 α -substituted steroid (II) where R_{7,1} is a substituent selected from the group consisting of





The second step is oxidative cleavage of the 7α -substituent to give a carboxylic acid functionality, $-\text{CO}-\text{OH}$ of the carboxylic acid (VI). In the olefinic substituent (-B), "M" is a group which forms a double bond with carbon and is restricted to carbon, nitrogen and oxygen. The substituent R_{b2} is a group that can be transformed into a hydroxyl group by either oxidation or hydrolysis. With the acetylenic substituent (-C), the group R_{c2} can be virtually any group since it is ultimately lost when the triple bond is cleaved to a carboxylic acid (VI). Likewise with the three-carbon unsaturated substituents (-D1), (-D2) and (-D3), two of the three carbon atoms are cleaved oxidatively, leaving a carboxylic acid group. In transforming the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) starting material to the corresponding 7α -substituted steroid (II), the $\Delta^{4,6}$ -3-keto steroid or ketal thereof (I) starting material is reacted with the nucleophile selected from the group consisting of

(d) of the formula (B)



(e) of the formula (C)

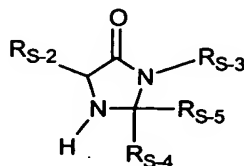


(f) of the formulas (D1, D2 and D3)

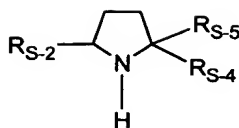


where R_a , E_1 , E_2 , M are as defined above, in the presence of:

- (1) a Lewis Acid,
- (2) a proton acid with a pK_a of $<$ about 5 or
- (3) a salt of a secondary amine of the formula



and



5 with an acid of pK_a of $<$ about 2. The Lewis acid both accelerates the conjugate addition and favors formation of the 7α -stereochemistry.

Adducts (-B) and (-C) are transformed into $-\text{CO}-\text{OH}$ of carboxylic acid (VI) by treatment with one or more oxidizing agents. The oxidizing agent(s) must be capable of cleaving the $\text{C}=\text{M}$ double bond to a carbon-oxygen double bond, cleaving the $\text{C}-\text{R}_{b2}$ single
 10 bond to a carbon-oxygen single bond, and cleaving the carbon-carbon triple bond to carboxylic acid. The choice of oxidizing agent(s) depends on the inherent difficulty of oxidation of the substituent $-\text{CR}_{b2}=\text{M}$ or $-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-\text{R}_{c2}$. The greater the difficulty of oxidation, the stronger the oxidizing agent that will be required. Suitable oxidizing agents include ozone, singlet oxygen, triplet oxygen, hydrogen peroxide, hydroperoxides, percarboxylic
 15 acids, hypohalites, and the like. In the case of 2-methylfuran adduct (II), transformation into carboxylic acid (VI) is preferably accomplished by treatment with potassium hypobromite followed by ozone followed by dimethylsulfide followed by hydrogen peroxide.

The allyl adduct (-D1) is transformed into $-\text{CO}-\text{OH}$ of the carboxylic acid (VI) by double bond isomerization to $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-\text{CH}_3$ followed by ozonization with an oxidative
 20 work-up (such as sodium chlorite). The double bond isomerization can be accomplished by any of the following reagents, rhodium trichloride in ethanol at reflux, $\text{HRuCl}[\text{P}(-\phi)_3]_3$ at about 90° , $\text{LiNH}(\text{CH}_2)_3\text{NH}_2$ (lithium 1,3-diaminopropane) at $20-25^\circ$, $\text{PdCl}_2(\phi-\text{CN})_2$ in toluene at about 80° , $\text{HRh}(\text{CO})[\text{P}(-\phi)_3]_3$ at $20-25^\circ$, $\text{ClRh}[\text{P}(-\phi)_3]_3$ in toluene at reflux, $\text{Cl}_2\text{Ru}[\text{P}(-\phi)_3]_3$ at 100° and cobalt chloride/sodium borohydride/ $\text{P}(-\phi)_3$ at about -18° .

25 The propargyl adduct (-D2) is transformed into the $-\text{CO}-\text{OH}$ functionality of the carboxylic acid (VI) by base or transition metal-catalyzed isomerization to adduct (-C) when R_{c2} is C_1 alkyl, which is cleaved by the method discussed above. Suitable bases for isomerization of (-D2) to (-C) include sodium amide in ammonia or THF, potassium 3-aminopropylamine (known as "KAPA") in THF, potassium hydroxide in ethylene glycol at

about 150°, potassium *t*-butoxide in DMSO or *t*-butanol, or sodium or potassium hydride in DMF or THF. Suitable transition metal catalysts include $\text{Yb}[\phi_2\text{C}=\text{N}-\phi](\text{HMPA})_4$ and $\text{HCo}(\text{N}_2)[\text{P}(-\phi)_3]_3$.

The allenyl adduct (-D3) is transformed into the -CO-OH functionality of the carboxylic acid (VI) by ozonization with an oxidative work-up (such as sodium chlorite).

The present invention includes a four-step process for the transformation of a 7 α -substituted steroid (II) to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI) product. The four steps are (1) ring opening, (2) ozonolysis, (3) reaction with a hydroperoxy deoxygenating agent and (4) reaction with an oxidatively cleaving agent. The four-step process of the invention produces better yields of the carboxylic acid (VI) than expected based on prior art process steps. The carboxylic acid (VI) is obtained by:

(1) contacting the 7 α -substituted steroid of formula (II) with an agent selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a halogenating agent in the presence of water and a base whose conjugate acid has a pK_a of > about 8,
- (b) an oxygen donating agent,
- (c) electrochemical oxidation,
- (d) a quinone in the presence of water or
- (e) nonquinone oxidants; and

(2) contacting the reaction mixture of step (1) with ozone in the presence of an alcohol of the formula $\text{R}_{7-2}\text{-OH}$;

(3) contacting the reaction mixture of step (2) with a hydroperoxy deoxygenating agent and

(4) contacting the reaction mixture of step (3) with an oxidatively cleaving agent.

Each of these steps was thoroughly discussed above when the steps of the process were discussed individually. This process combines those same steps and they are practiced in the same manner and same way as discussed above.

The present invention includes a three-step process for the transformation of a 7 α -substituted steroid (II) to the corresponding carboxylic acid (VI) product, see EXAMPLE 34, Step (1). The three steps are (1) ozonolysis, (2) reaction with a hydroperoxy deoxygenating

agent and (3) reaction with an oxidatively cleaving agent. The three-step process of the invention is a process to prepare the carboxylic acid (VI) which comprises:

(1) contacting a 7 α -substituted steroid (II) with ozone in the presence of an alcohol of the formula R₇₋₂-OH;

5 (2) contacting the reaction mixture of step (1) with a hydroperoxy deoxygenating agent and

(3) contacting the reaction mixture of step (2) with an oxidatively cleaving agent.

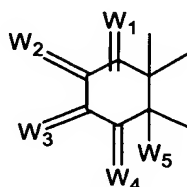
Each of these steps was thoroughly discussed above when the steps of the process were discussed individually. This process combines those same steps and they are practiced in the same manner and same way as discussed above. The carboxylic acid (VI) can be readily transformed to its tautomer-like the bislactone (VII) by contacting with an acid, see
10 EXAMPLE 34, Step (2). In the process of the invention it is the carboxylic acid (VI) which is transformed to the methyl ester (VIII) and ultimately to eplerenone (IX). It is possible to isolate and purify this carboxylic acid (VI) by crystallization. However, one runs the risk that
15 it will isomerize to the bislactone (VII) which is more thermodynamically stable. Therefore, as a practical matter it is preferable not to stop at the end of EXAMPLE 34, Step (1) but carry on thru the reaction mixture and isolate and crystallize the bislactone (VII). Hence, it is easier and preferable to carry the process exemplified in EXAMPLE 34 on thru Step (2), purify the bislactone (VII) obtained and then convert the bislactone (VII) back to the carboxylic acid
20 (VI) for transformation to the methyl ester (VIII).

Eplerenone (IX) is a pharmaceutical agent useful for the treatment of hyperaldosteronism, edema, hypertension and congestive heart failure, see US Patent 4,559,332.

The present invention also includes a novel process to transform 11 α -hydroxy steroids
25 to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -steroids. The $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -functionality is very useful in producing eplerenone (IX) because it is readily transformed to the corresponding 9 α ,11 α -epoxide functionality of eplerenone (IX).

The 11 α -hydroxy steroid (CIV) starting materials are known to those skilled in the art. More particularly, the 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactone (CI), 11 α ,17 β -dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-
30 7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester, is known, see, *Drugs of the Future*, 24(5), 488-501 (1999), compound (VI).

For the 11 α -hydroxy steroids (CIV) it is preferred that the steroid A-ring is:



(A-ring)

(1) W_1 is $-H:-H$ and W_2 is $-H:-H$ or W_1 is $W_{1-1}:W_{1-2}$ and W_2 is $W_{2-1}:W_{2-2}$ where one of W_{1-1} or W_{1-2} is taken together with one of W_{2-1} or W_{2-2} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other or W_{1-1} or W_{1-2} and W_{2-1} or W_{2-2} is $-H$; W_3 is $=O$, W_4 is $W_{4-1}:W_{4-2}$ where one of W_{4-1} and W_{4-2} is taken together with W_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{4-1} and W_{4-2} is $-H$;

(2) W_3 is $=O$, W_4 is $-H:-H$ and W_5 is in the α -orientation and is $\cdots O-CO-$ (attached at C_7 to form a 5,7-lactone) and where W_1 and W_2 are as defined above;

(3) W_3 is $-O-W_{3-3}:-O-W_{3-4}$; W_4 is $W_{4-3}:W_{4-4}$, where one of W_{4-3} and W_{4-4} is taken together with W_5 to form a second bond between the atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{4-3} and W_{4-4} is $-H$; W_{3-3} and W_{3-4} are:

(a) the same or different and are C_1-C_5 alkyl,
(b) taken together to form a cyclic moiety selected from the group consisting of: -

(i) $-CH_2-CH_2-$,
(ii) $-CH_2-CH_2-CH_2-$,
(iii) $-CH_2-C(CH_3)_2-CH_2-$; and where W_1 and W_2 are as defined above;

(4) W_3 is $-O-W_{3-3}:-O-W_{3-4}$; W_4 is $-H:-H$; W_5 forms a second bond between C_5 and C_6 ; W_{3-3} and W_{3-4} are as defined above:

(5) W_3 is $W_{3-5}:W_{3-6}$; where

(a) one of W_{3-5} and W_{3-6} is $-H$ and the other of W_{3-5} and W_{3-6} is:
(i) $-O-W_{3-5A}$ where W_{3-5A} is C_1-C_3 alkyl,
(ii) $-O-CO-W_{3-5A}$ where W_{3-5A} is as defined above,
(iii) $-N(W_{3-5A})_2$ where W_{3-5A} is as defined above,

(iv) piperazinyl,

(v) morpholinyl,

(vi) piperidinyl,

(b) W_{3-5} and W_{3-6} are taken together with the carbon atom to which
5 they are attached to form a cyclic moiety including:

(i) $-O-CH_2-CH_2-O-$,

(ii) $-O-CH_2-CH_2-CH_2-O-$,

(iii) $-O-CH_2-C(CH_3)_2-CH_2-O-$ and where W_4 is $-H:-H$; W_5
forms a second bond between C_5 and C_6 ;

10 (6) W_3 is $W_{3-7}:W_{3-8}$ and where W_4 is $W_{4-7}:W_{4-8}$ where

(a) one of W_{3-7} and W_{3-8} is:

(i) $-O-W_{3-7A}$ where W_{3-7A} is C_1-C_3 alkyl,

(ii) $-O-CO-W_{3-7A}$ where W_{3-7A} is as defined above,

(iii) $-N(W_{3-7A})_2$ where W_{3-7A} is as defined above,

15 (iv) piperazinyl,

(v) morpholinyl,

(vi) piperidinyl, and where the other of W_{3-7} and W_{3-8} is taken
together with one of W_{4-7} and W_{4-8} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which
they are attached and the other of W_{4-7} and W_{4-8} is $-H$; W_5 forms a second bond between C_5
20 and C_6 ;

(7) W_3 is $\alpha-W_{3-9}:\beta-W_{3-10}$; where W_{3-9} is $-H$ and W_{3-10} is:

(a) $-O-CO-W_{3-10A}$ where W_{3-10A} is C_1-C_3 alkyl,

(b) $-O-CO-O-W_{3-10B}$ where W_{3-10B} is

(i) C_1-C_4 alkyl,

25 (ii) $-\phi$ optionally substituted with one thru three C_1-C_3 alkyl,
g-F, -Cl, -Br, -I, C_1-C_3 alkoxy,

(iii) $-CH_2-\phi$ where ϕ is optionally substituted with one thru
three C_1-C_3 alkyl, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, C_1-C_3 alkoxy; where W_4 is $-H:-H$; and W_5 forms a second
bond between the carbon atoms at C_5 and C_6 ; and where W_1 and W_2 are as defined above;

30

(8) W_3 is α - W_{3-9} : β - W_{3-10} ; where W_4 is W_{4-9} : W_{4-10} where W_{3-9} and W_{3-10} are as defined above; where one of W_{4-9} and W_{4-10} taken together with W_5 forms a second bond between the atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{4-9} and W_{4-10} is -H; and where W_1 and W_2 are as defined above.

5 It is more preferred that the steroid A-ring functionality be:

(1) W_1 is -H:-H and W_2 is -H:-H or W_1 is W_{1-1} : W_{1-2} and W_2 is W_{2-1} : W_{2-2} where one of W_{1-1} or W_{1-2} is taken together with one of W_{2-1} or W_{2-2} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{1-1} or W_{1-2} and W_{2-1} or W_{2-2} is -H; W_3 is =O, W_4 is W_{4-1} : W_{4-2} where one of W_{4-1} and W_{4-2} is taken together with W_5 to form a
10 second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{4-1} and W_{4-2} is -H;

(7) W_3 is α - W_{3-9} : β - W_{3-10} ; where W_{3-9} is -H and W_{3-10} is:

(b) -CO- W_{3-10A} where W_{3-10A} is C_1 - C_3 alkyl,

(c) -CO-O- W_{3-10B} where W_{3-10B} is

15 (i) C_1 - C_4 alkyl,

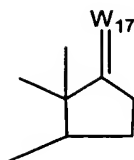
(ii) - ϕ optionally substituted with one thru three C_1 - C_3 alkyl,
-F, -Cl, -Br, -I, C_1 - C_3 alkoxy,

(iii) -CH₂- ϕ where ϕ is optionally substituted with one thru three C_1 - C_3 alkyl, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, C_1 - C_3 alkoxy; where W_4 is -H:-H; and W_5 forms a second bond
20 between the carbon atoms at C_5 and C_6 ; and where W_1 and W_2 are as defined above.

It is even more preferred that the steroid A-ring functionality be:

(1) W_1 is -H:-H and W_2 is -H:-H or W_1 is W_{1-1} : W_{1-2} and W_2 is W_{2-1} : W_{2-2} where one of W_{1-1} or W_{1-2} is taken together with one of W_{2-1} or W_{2-2} to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{1-1} or
25 W_{1-2} and W_{2-1} or W_{2-2} is -H; W_3 is =O, W_4 is W_{4-1} : W_{4-2} where one of W_{4-1} and W_{4-2} is taken together with W_5 to form a second bond between the carbon atoms to which they are attached and the other of W_{4-1} and W_{4-2} is -H;

For the 11 α -hydroxy steroids (CIV), it is preferred that the steroid D-ring is:



(D-ring)

where W_{17} is:

(1) $=O$,

(2) α - W_{17-1} : β - W_{17-2} where:

5 (a) W_{17-1} and W_{17-2} are taken together with the attached carbon atom to form an epoxide of the formula $\cdots CH_2-O$,

(b) W_{17-1} and W_{17-2} are taken together with the attached carbon atom to form a lactone of the formula $\cdots CH_2-CH_2-CO-O$;

(3) α - W_{17-3} : β - W_{17-4} where

10 (a) W_{17-3} is:

(i) $-H$,

(ii) $-O-CO-W_{17-3A}$ where W_{17-3A} is $-H$ or $-CO-W_{17-3B}$ where W_{17-3B} is C_1-C_4 alkyl or $-\phi$ and

(b) W_{17-4} is $-CO-CH_3$;

15 (4) α - W_{17-5} : β - W_{17-6} where

(a) W_{17-5} is:

(i) $-O-CO-W_{17-5A}$ where W_{17-5A} is C_1-C_4 alkyl or $-\phi$,

(b) W_{17-6} is:

(i) $-CO-CH_2-O-W_{17-6A}$ where W_{17-6A} is C_1-C_4 alkyl or
20 $-\phi$.

For the eplerenone-type compounds, it is preferred that W_{17} is:

(1) $=O$,

(2) α - W_{17-1} : β - W_{17-2} where:

(a) W_{17-1} and W_{17-2} are taken together with the attached carbon atom
25 to form an epoxide of the formula $\cdots CH_2-O$,

(b) W_{17-1} and W_{17-2} are taken together with the attached carbon atom to form a lactone of the formula $\cdots CH_2-CH_2-CO-O$.

It is more preferred that for the eplerenone-type compounds that W_{17} is:

(1) =O,

(2) α -W₁₇₋₁: β -W₁₇₋₂ where:

(b) W₁₇₋₁ and W₁₇₋₂ are taken together with the attached carbon atom to form a lactone of the formula $\cdots\text{CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-CO-O-}$.

5 For the progesterones and hydroxyprogesterones it is preferred that that W₁₇ is:

(3) α -W₁₇₋₃: β -W₁₇₋₄ where

(a) W₁₇₋₃ is:

(i) -H,

(ii) -O-CO-W_{17-3A} where W_{17-3A} is -H or -CO-W_{17-3B} where

10 W_{17-3B} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or - ϕ and

(b) W₁₇₋₄ is -CO-CH₃.

For the corticoids it is preferred that W₁₇ is:

(4) α -W₁₇₋₅: β -W₁₇₋₆ where

(a) W₁₇₋₅ is:

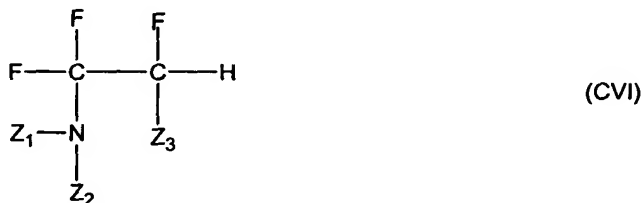
15 (i) -O-CO-W_{17-5A} where W_{17-5A} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or - ϕ ,

(b) W₁₇₋₆ is:

(i) -CO-CH₂-O-W_{17-6A} where W_{17-6A} is C₁-C₄ alkyl or - ϕ .

20 The preferred combinations of steroid A-, B- and D-rings, especially for the eplerenone-type compounds, includes the ring systems set forth in CHART C. The 11 α -hydroxy steroids (CIV) of CHART C are known to those skilled in the art or can be readily prepared by known methods from known compounds.

In the process of the present invention the 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactones (CI) or 11 α -hydroxy steroids (CIV) starting material is contacted with a N-fluoroalkylamine reagent of the
25 formula (CVI)



where:

Z_1 is C_1 - C_4 alkyl;

Z_2 is C_1 - C_4 alkyl and where Z_1 and Z_2 together with the attached nitrogen atom form a 5- or 6-member heterocycle selected from the group consisting of pyrrolidinyl, piperazinyl, piperidinyl and morpholinyl;

5 Z_3 is $-F$ or $-CF_3$. It is preferred that Z_1 and Z_2 are C_1 - C_3 alkyl. It is more preferred that Z_1 and Z_2 are C_1 alkyl or C_2 alkyl. It is preferred that the N-fluoroalkylamine (CVI) is N-(1,1,2,3,3,3-hexafluoropropyl)diethylamine, which is known as Ishikawa reagent, or 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl-N,N-dimethylamine.

The process of the invention is preferably performed by use of about 1 equivalent of
10 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactone (CI) or 11 α -hydroxy steroid (CIV) and from about 1 to about 1.5 equivalents of Ishikawa reagent; more preferred is about 1.2 equivalents of Ishikawa reagent. It is preferable to perform the process of the invention in a temperature range of from about 20 to about 82°; more preferably from about 40 to about 70°. The reaction usually takes from about 1 hr to about 24 to complete depending on reaction conditions especially temperature
15 and concentration. For example at about 60° and 0.8 molar, the reaction takes about 3 hours.

The 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactone (CI) or 11 α -hydroxy steroid (CIV) can be added to the N-fluoroalkylamine reagent (CVI) or the N-fluoroalkylamine reagent (CVI) can be added to the 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactone (CI) or 11 α -hydroxy steroid (CIV); it is more practical to add the N-fluoroalkylamine reagent (CVI) to the 11 α -hydroxy-17-lactone (CI) or 11 α -hydroxy steroid
20 (CIV).

It is preferred to perform the process of the present invention in a solvent that is dry (KF is < 0.5%), such as acetonitrile.

The $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -17-lactone of formula (CII), 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester, is known, see US Patent 4,559,332, Example 1(d)
25 and International Publication WO98/25948, page 284. It is useful in the preparation of a pharmaceutical agent, 9 α ,11 α -epoxy-17 β -hydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester, known as eplerenone (CIII).

The steroid C-ring functionality $\Delta^{9(11)}$ - of compounds (CII) and (CV) is a very useful functionality to chemists skilled in the art of steroids. It can be readily transformed to the
30 corresponding 9 α ,11 α -epoxy functionality and the 9 α -fluoro-11 β -hydroxy functionality as well as 11-keto and others as is well known to those skilled in the art. These compounds are

useful pharmaceutical agents. Hence, the process of the invention as it pertains to the transformation of the 11 α -hydroxy steroid (CIV) to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -steroid (CV) is a very useful process and is operable with a wide variety of 11 α -hydroxy steroids (CIV) as is apparent to those skilled in the art. This includes progesterones, 17 α -hydroxyprogesterones, corticoids as well as the usual common derivatives and analogs thereof such as esters, etc. Therefore, the process produces $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -steroids (CV) which are useful intermediates in the preparation of pharmaceutically useful steroids. One skilled in the art with a given $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -steroid (CV) would know how to transform it to a pharmaceutically useful product.

The present invention also includes a number of processes for transforming 11 α -hydroxy compounds to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -compounds by one or more processes described above. For example, described are processes for the transformation of (1) a 11 α -hydroxy-7 α -substituted steroid (II) to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -7 α -substituted steroid (II), (2) a process for transforming a 11 α -hydroxy *cis* enedione (III-*cis*) or 11 α -hydroxy *trans* enedione (III-*trans*) to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -*trans* enedione (III-*trans*) and (3) for transforming a 11 α -hydroxy-hydroxy compound (IV-OH) or a 11 α -hydroxy-hydroperoxy compound (IV-OOH) or a 11 α -hydroxy biscarbonyl compound (V) or mixture thereof to the corresponding $\Delta^{9(11)}$ -carboxylic acid (VI).

DEFINITIONS AND CONVENTIONS

The definitions and explanations below are for the terms as used throughout this entire document including both the specification and the claims.

I. CONVENTIONS FOR FORMULAS AND DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

The chemical formulas representing various compounds or molecular fragments in the specification and claims may contain variable substituents in addition to expressly defined structural features. These variable substituents are identified by a letter or a letter followed by a numerical subscript, for example, "Z_i" or "R_i" where "i" is an integer. These variable substituents are either monovalent or bivalent, that is, they represent a group attached to the formula by one or two chemical bonds. For example, a group Z₁ would represent a bivalent variable if attached to the formula CH₃-C(=Z₁)H. Groups R_i and R_j would represent monovalent variable substituents if attached to the formula CH₃-CH₂-C(R_i)(R_j)H₂. When chemical formulas are drawn in a linear fashion, such as those above, variable substituents contained in parentheses are bonded to the atom immediately to the left of the variable

substituent enclosed in parenthesis. When two or more consecutive variable substituents are enclosed in parentheses, each of the consecutive variable substituents is bonded to the immediately preceding atom to the left which is not enclosed in parentheses. Thus, in the formula above, both R_i and R_j are bonded to the preceding carbon atom. Also, for any molecule with an established system of carbon atom numbering, such as steroids, these carbon atoms are designated as C_i , where "i" is the integer corresponding to the carbon atom number. For example, C_6 represents the 6 position or carbon atom number in the steroid nucleus as traditionally designated by those skilled in the art of steroid chemistry. Likewise the term " R_6 " represents a variable substituent (either monovalent or bivalent) at the C_6 position.

Chemical formulas or portions thereof drawn in a linear fashion represent atoms in a linear chain. The symbol "-" in general represents a bond between two atoms in the chain. Thus $CH_3-O-CH_2-CH(R_i)-CH_3$ represents a 2-substituted-1-methoxypropane compound. In a similar fashion, the symbol "=" represents a double bond, e.g., $CH_2=C(R_i)-O-CH_3$, and the symbol "≡" represents a triple bond, e.g., $HC\equiv C-CH(R_i)-CH_2-CH_3$. Carbonyl groups are represented in either one of two ways: $-CO-$ or $-C(=O)-$, with the former being preferred for simplicity.

Chemical formulas of cyclic (ring) compounds or molecular fragments can be represented in a linear fashion. Thus, the compound 4-chloro-2-methylpyridine can be represented in linear fashion by $N^*=C(CH_3)-CH=CCl-CH=C^*H$ with the convention that the atoms marked with an asterisk (*) are bonded to each other resulting in the formation of a ring. Likewise, the cyclic molecular fragment, 4-(ethyl)-1-piperazinyll can be represented by $-N^*-(CH_2)_2-N(C_2H_5)-CH_2-C^*H_2$.

A rigid cyclic (ring) structure for any compounds herein defines an orientation with respect to the plane of the ring for substituents attached to each carbon atom of the rigid cyclic compound. For saturated compounds which have two substituents attached to a carbon atom which is part of a cyclic system, $-C(X_1)(X_2)-$ the two substituents may be in either an axial or equatorial position relative to the ring and may change between axial/equatorial. However, the position of the two substituents relative to the ring and each other remains fixed. While either substituent at times may lie in the plane of the ring (equatorial) rather than above or below the plane (axial), one substituent is always above the other. In chemical

structural formulas depicting such compounds, a substituent (X_1) which is "below" another substituent (X_2) will be identified as being in the alpha (α) configuration and is identified by a broken, dashed or dotted line attachment to the carbon atom, i.e., by the symbol "- - -" or "...". The corresponding substituent attached "above" (X_2) the other (X_1) is identified as being in the beta (β) configuration and is indicated by an unbroken line attachment to the carbon atom.

When a variable substituent is bivalent, the valences may be taken together or separately or both in the definition of the variable. For example, a variable R_i attached to a carbon atom as $-C(=R_i)-$ might be bivalent and be defined as oxo or keto (thus forming a carbonyl group $(-CO-)$ or as two separately attached monovalent variable substituents $\alpha-R_{i-j}$ and $\beta-R_{i-k}$. When a bivalent variable, R_i , is defined to consist of two monovalent variable substituents, the convention used to define the bivalent variable is of the form " $\alpha-R_{i-j}:\beta-R_{i-k}$ " or some variant thereof. In such a case both $\alpha-R_{i-j}$ and $\beta-R_{i-k}$ are attached to the carbon atom to give $-C(\alpha-R_{i-j})(\beta-R_{i-k})-$. For example, when the bivalent variable R_6 , $-C(=R_6)-$ is defined to consist of two monovalent variable substituents, the two monovalent variable substituents are $\alpha-R_{6-1}:\beta-R_{6-2}$, $\alpha-R_{6-9}:\beta-R_{6-10}$, etc, giving $-C(\alpha-R_{6-1})(\beta-R_{6-2})-$, $-C(\alpha-R_{6-9})(\beta-R_{6-10})-$, etc. Likewise, for the bivalent variable R_{11} , $-C(=R_{11})-$, two monovalent variable substituents are $\alpha-R_{11-1}:\beta-R_{11-2}$. For a ring substituent for which separate α and β orientations do not exist (e.g. due to the presence of a carbon carbon double bond in the ring), and for a substituent bonded to a carbon atom which is not part of a ring the above convention is still used, but the α and β designations are omitted.

Just as a bivalent variable may be defined as two separate monovalent variable substituents, two separate monovalent variable substituents may be defined to be taken together to form a bivalent variable. For example, in the formula $-C_1(R_i)H-C_2(R_j)H-$ (C_1 and C_2 define arbitrarily a first and second carbon atom, respectively) R_i and R_j may be defined to be taken together to form (1) a second bond between C_1 and C_2 or (2) a bivalent group such as oxa $(-O-)$ and the formula thereby describes an epoxide. When R_i and R_j are taken together to form a more complex entity, such as the group $-X-Y-$, then the orientation of the entity is such that C_1 in the above formula is bonded to X and C_2 is bonded to Y . Thus, by convention the designation "... R_i and R_j are taken together to form $-CH_2-CH_2-O-CO-$..." means a lactone in which the carbonyl is bonded to C_2 . However, when designated "... R_j and R_i are taken

together to form -CO-O-CH₂-CH₂-the convention means a lactone in which the carbonyl is bonded to C₁.

The carbon atom content of variable substituents is indicated in one of two ways. The first method uses a prefix to the entire name of the variable such as "C₁-C₄", where both "1" and "4" are integers representing the minimum and maximum number of carbon atoms in the variable. The prefix is separated from the variable by a space. For example, "C₁-C₄ alkyl" represents alkyl of 1 through 4 carbon atoms, (including isomeric forms thereof unless an express indication to the contrary is given). Whenever this single prefix is given, the prefix indicates the entire carbon atom content of the variable being defined. Thus C₂-C₄ alkoxy-carbonyl describes a group CH₃-(CH₂)_n-O-CO- where n is zero, one or two. By the second method the carbon atom content of only each portion of the definition is indicated separately by enclosing the "C_i-C_j" designation in parentheses and placing it immediately (no intervening space) before the portion of the definition being defined. By this optional convention (C₁-C₃)alkoxycarbonyl has the same meaning as C₂-C₄ alkoxy-carbonyl because the "C₁-C₃" refers only to the carbon atom content of the alkoxy group. Similarly while both C₂-C₆ alkoxyalkyl and (C₁-C₃)alkoxy(C₁-C₃)alkyl define alkoxyalkyl groups containing from 2 to 6 carbon atoms, the two definitions differ since the former definition allows either the alkoxy or alkyl portion alone to contain 4 or 5 carbon atoms while the latter definition limits either of these groups to 3 carbon atoms.

When the claims contain a fairly complex (cyclic) substituent, at the end of the phrase naming/designating that particular substituent will be a notation in (parentheses) which will correspond to the same name/designation in one of the CHARTS which will also set forth the chemical structural formula of that particular substituent.

II. DEFINITIONS

All temperatures are in degrees Celsius.
 TLC refers to thin-layer chromatography.
 LC refers to liquid chromatography.
 ESTDLC refers to external standard liquid chromatography.
 THF refers to tetrahydrofuran.
 DMAP refers to *p*-dimethylaminopyridine.
 DDQ refers to 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone.

DBU refers to 1,8-diazabicyclo[5.4.0]undec-7-ene.

DBN refers to 1,5-diazabicyclo[4.3.0]non-5-ene.

DABCO refers 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane.

Chromatography (column and flash chromatography) refers to purification/separation
 5 of compounds expressed as (support, eluent). It is understood that the appropriate fractions
 are pooled and concentrated to give the desired compound(s).

Carboxylic acid (VI) refers to and includes the pharmaceutically acceptable salts
 thereof.

CMR refers to C-13 magnetic resonance spectroscopy, chemical shifts are reported in
 10 ppm (δ) downfield from TMS.

NMR refers to nuclear (proton) magnetic resonance spectroscopy, chemical shifts are
 reported in ppm (δ) downfield from TMS.

In the present invention the terms conversion/transformation or convert/transform are
 used interchangeable and mean the same thing, the reaction of one compound to form a
 15 different compound by the process described.

TMS refers to trimethylsilyl.

Oxone refers to KHSO_5 .

$-\phi$ refers to phenyl (C_6H_5).

MS refers to mass spectrometry expressed as m/e , m/z or mass/charge unit. $[\text{M} + \text{H}]^+$
 20 refers to the positive ion of a parent plus a hydrogen atom. EI refers to electron impact. CI
 refers to chemical ionization. FAB refers to fast atom bombardment.

Pharmaceutically acceptable refers to those properties and/or substances which are
 acceptable to the patient from a pharmacological/toxicological point of view and to the
 manufacturing pharmaceutical chemist from a physical/chemical point of view regarding
 25 composition, formulation, stability, patient acceptance and bioavailability.

When solvent pairs are used, the ratios of solvents used are volume/volume (v/v).

When the solubility of a solid in a solvent is used the ratio of the solid to the solvent is
 weight/volume (wt/v).

Δ^9 -Canrenone refers to 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,6,9-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -
 30 lactone.

Eplerenone refers to 9 α ,11 α -epoxy-17 β -hydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester.

Neopentylglycol refers to HO-CH₂-C(CH₃)₂-CH₂-OH.

Iodosobenzene refers to $\phi\text{I}=\text{O}$.

5 Iodobenzenebistrifluoroacetate refers to $\phi\text{I}(\text{O}-\text{CO}-\text{CF}_3)_2$.

Iodobenzenediacetate refers to $\phi\text{I}(\text{O}-\text{CO}-\text{CH}_3)_2$.

Tritylfluoroborate is also known as triphenylcarbenium fluoroborate and refers to $\phi_3\text{C}^+\text{BF}_4^-$.

acac refers to acetylacetonate.

10 dppb refers to diphenylphosphino butane.

Tf refers to trifluoromethanesulfonate.

Dimethylsulfide refers to CH₃SCH₃.

Ishikawa reagent refers to N-(1,1,2,2,3,3,3)hexafluoropropyldiethylamine.

An "oxidatively cleaving agent" is a reagent that oxidizes the biscarbonyl compound
15 (V) or hydroxy compound (IV-OH) to the carboxylic acid (VI).

A "hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent" is a reagent that removes an oxygen atom from a hydroperoxide compound (IV-OOH) to give the corresponding hydroxy compound (IV-OH).

A "deoxygenating agent" is a reagent that removes one oxygen atom from a molecule.

20 The "hydroperoxy-deoxygenating agent" is thus a particular type of deoxygenating agent.

A "carboxylic acid forming agent" is a reagent that induces a hydroperoxide compound (IV-OOH) to rearrange to a carboxylic acid (VI).

An "oxygen donating agent" is a reagent that provides an oxygen atom to a 7 α -substituted steroid (II) to transform it into a cis enedione (III-*cis*).

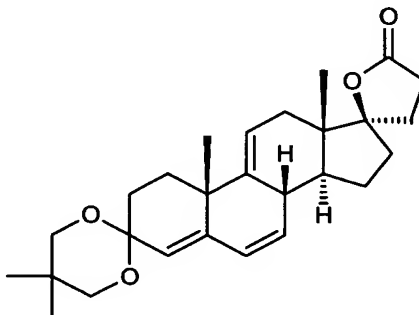
25 PXRD refers to powder X-ray diffraction.

EXAMPLES

Without further elaboration, it is believed that one skilled in the art can, using the preceding description, practice the present invention to its fullest extent. The following detailed examples describe how to prepare the various compounds and/or perform the various
30 processes of the invention and are to be construed as merely illustrative, and not limitations of the preceding disclosure in any way whatsoever. Those skilled in the art will promptly

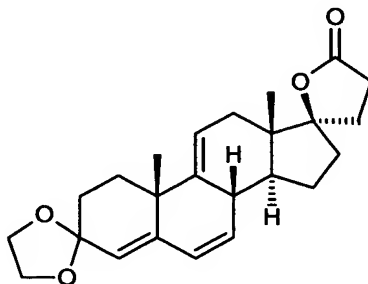
recognize appropriate variations from the procedures both as to reactants and as to reaction conditions and techniques.

EXAMPLE 1 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone, cyclic 3-(2',2'-dimethyl-1',3'-propanediyl ketal) (I-P)



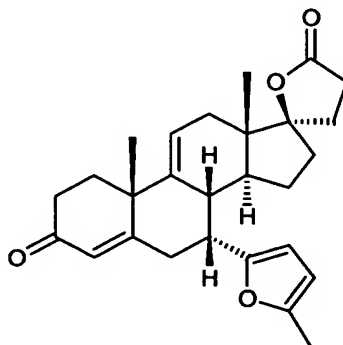
5 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone 3-methyl enol ether (I, 3.00 g, 8.4629 mmoles) and lithium perchlorate (199.6 mg, 1.8761 mmoles, 0.22 equivalents) are slurried in acetonitrile (20 ml) and methylene chloride (10) are cooled to -15° , treated with 2,2-dimethyl-1,3-propyleneglycol (2.19 g, 21.027 mmoles, 2.48
10 equivalents), then treated drop wise over 73 min. with a solution of DDQ (2.29 g, 10.088 mmoles, 1.19 equivalents) in ethyl acetate. After stirring for 40 min, the reaction mixture is quenched with ammonium hydroxide (28%, 5 ml), diluted with ethyl acetate, concentrated, diluted with methylene chloride, and filtered. The filtrate is diluted with ethyl acetate, washed with aqueous sodium bicarbonate/sodium chloride followed by water, then filtered
15 through magnesol, eluting with methylene chloride. The eluate is concentrated to give solids which are triturated with toluene, dried by a stream of nitrogen to give the title compound, CMR (CDCl_3) 14.44, 22.53, 22.78, 23.02, 24.89, 28.85, 29.22, 30.07, 30.18, 31.31, 32.92, 35.37, 38.56, 39.03, 44.35, 44.43, 70.54, 70.65, 95.17, 95.43, 116.80, 120.23, 127.82, 130.27, 141.83, 145.08 and 176.61 δ ; NMR (CDCl_3) 0.95, 0.97, 1.03, 1.18, 1.3-2.8, 3.5-3.7, 5.44,
20 5.71, 5.80 and 6.02 δ .

EXAMPLE 2 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone, cyclic 3-ethanediyl ketal (I-P)



17 β -hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone 3-methyl enol ether (I, 300 mg, 0.8463 mmoles) in methylene chloride (5 ml) is cooled to -15° then treated with ethylene glycol (220 mg, 3.544 mmoles, 4.19 equivalents). To this mixture is added drop wise over 30 min. a solution of DDQ (230 mg, 1.0132 mmoles, 1.20 equivalents). After the addition is complete, the reaction is stirred at -15° for 5 min., at which time TLC analysis (ethyl acetate/cyclohexane, 66/34) shows conversion of the starting methyl enol ether ($R_f =$ 0.69) into the corresponding ethylene ketal ($R_f = 0.54$) was nearly complete. The reaction is then quenched with concentrated ammonium hydroxide (0.5 ml), and filtered. The filtrate is then filtered through 1.0 g cartridge grade magnesol and concentrated to give the title compound, by comparison with an authentic sample, CMR (CDCl_3) 14.37, 22.95, 24.54, 29.15, 30.28, 31.23, 32.87, 35.30, 38.17, 38.45, 44.27, 44.37, 64.15, 64.70, 95.07, 105.94, 116.85, 122.39, 127.41, 130.24, 141.71, 145.76 and 176.51 δ ; NMR (CDCl_3) 0.97, 1.18, 1.3-2.9, 3.8-4.1, 5.29, 5.45, 5.70 and 5.99 δ .

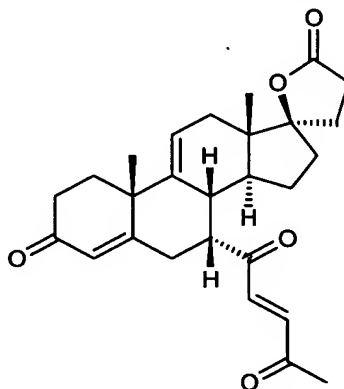
EXAMPLE 3 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



Δ^9 -canrenone (I, 90.0 g, 0.2659 moles) is mixed with nitromethane (730-735 ml). Then 2-methylfuran (49.5 ml, 45.04 g, 0.5487 moles, 2.06 equivalents) is added. The resulting mixture is cooled to -20° then treated with absolute ethanol (15.8 ml, 12.55 g, 0.2723 moles, 1.02 equivalents) followed by boron trifluoride etherate, ($d = 1.120$; 37.2 ml, 41.66 g, 0.2936 moles, 1.10 equivalents). The mixture is recooled to -18.4° and stirred for 17 hrs., at which time the reaction was complete by LC. The reaction mixture is quenched with ammonia (15% aqueous, 225 ml). The mixture is warmed to above 0° , water (200 ml) is added, the organic phase is separated, and the aqueous phase is extracted with methylene chloride (2 x 200 ml). The organic extracts are dried over magnesium sulfate (100 g) then filtered through magnesol (100 g cartridge grade), washing the cake with methylene chloride (5 x 200 ml). The eluate is then concentrated under reduced pressure to a foam, slurried with ethyl acetate (200 ml) and reconcentrated, then dissolved in ethyl acetate (950 ml) at 50° to 60° . The mixture is concentrated to about 500 ml volume, then diluted with cyclohexane (250 ml). The product begins to crystallize slowly. The slurry is reconcentrated to about 500 ml volume, cooled to $20-25^\circ$, further concentrated to about 400 ml volume, then cooled to 0° . After overnight at 0° , the slurry is filtered and the cake washed with cyclohexane followed by heptane and dried in a vacuum oven at 50° to give the title compound, TLC = 0.37 (ethyl acetate/cyclohexane, 66/34), CMR (CDCl_3) 13.38, 14.12, 23.18, 26.83, 29.14, 31.26, 32.93, 33.93, 34.18, 35.39, 37.57, 38.52, 40.78, 41.90, 42.39, 44.08, 95.19, 105.89, 107.12, 119.73, 126.24, 149.99, 152.74, 167.45, 76.53 and 198.56; NMR (CDCl_3) 0.95, 1.43, 1.4-2.6, 2.16, 2.93, 3.30, 5.68 and 5.74 δ .

The filtrate is concentrated to a foam which is dissolved in ethyl acetate (40 ml), concentrated to about 20 ml, seeded, diluted with cyclohexane (20 ml), concentrated to about 30 ml, cooled to 0° over the weekend, then filtered, washed with ethyl acetate/cyclohexane (1/2) and dried to give additional title compound.

EXAMPLE 4 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(*trans*-1',4'-dioxopent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*trans*)



Step A: 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(*cis*-1',4'-dioxopent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*cis*)

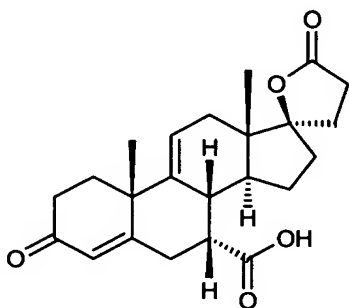
A mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II, EXAMPLE 3, 5.04 g, 11.9843 mmoles) and potassium acetate (1.7 g, 17.32 mmoles, 1.45 equivalents) in THF (40 ml) and water (12.5 ml) at 23.8° is treated with dibromantin (2.0 g, 6.995 mmoles, 0.58 equivalents) followed by isobutyl vinyl ether (500 μ l, 384 mg, 3.834 mmoles, 0.32 equivalents). The reaction mixture is stirred at 20-25° for 1 hr., at which time conversion of the starting material (II, R_f = 0.50) into *cis*- and *trans*-enedione (R_f = 0.11) is complete by TLC (ethyl acetate/cyclohexane, 66/34). The reaction mixture is diluted with water (200 ml) and extracted with methylene chloride (2 x 100 ml). The extracts are combined, washed with water (50 ml), dried over magnesium sulfate, filtered and concentrated to give the *cis*-enedione (III-*cis*).

Step B: 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(*trans*-1',4'-dioxopent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*trans*)

The concentrate (Step A) is taken up in chloroform (100 ml) and the mixture is stirred at 20-25° for 20 hrs., at which time conversion of *cis*-enedione into *trans*-enedione is judged to be complete as measured by TLC and LC (*cis/trans* = 1.1/98.9). The mixture is then concentrated and the concentrate is taken up in ethyl acetate (20 ml) at 20-25° and diluted with cyclohexane (80 ml), which induces crystallization. The slurry is cooled, filtered, and the cake washed with cyclohexane and dried under reduced pressure at 50° to give the title

compound, CMR (CDCl₃) 13.98, 23.28, 27.08, 28.66, 29.01, 31.26, 32.77, 33.61, 34.01, 35.22, 35.28, 40.48, 40.51, 42.41, 44.43, 48.13, 94.77, 118.81, 126.03, 135.89, 137.04, 142.16, 165.21, 176.32, 197.81, 198.26 and 200.18; NMR (CDCl₃) 1.04, 1.30, 1.51, 1.5-3.6, 2.45, 5.71, 5.78 and 6.89 δ ; MS (electrospray) $m/e = 435$ ($p^+ - 1$) negative ion mode;

5 EXAMPLE 5 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone (VI)



10

Step A: 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(1'-oxo-2'-isopropoxy-2'-hydroxy-ethyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (IV-OH); 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(1'-oxo-2'-isopropoxy-2'-hydroperoxyethyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (IV-OOH) and 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(2'-oxo-acetyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (V)

15

A mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(*trans*-1',4'-dioxo-pent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*trans*, EXAMPLE 4, 551.8 mg, 1.2640 mmoles) in isopropanol (11 ml) and methylene chloride (5 ml) is cooled to -55° . Ozone in oxygen is bubbled through this mixture until 0.4 area% (by LC) *trans*-enedione (III) remained. The mixture is purged of ozone by sparging with nitrogen for 7 minutes to give a mixture of the title compounds.

20

Step B: 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(1'-oxo-2'-isopropoxy-2'-hydroxy-ethyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (IV-OH), 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(1',2'-dioxo-ethyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (V) and

17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(2'-oxo-acetyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic
acid, γ -lactone (V)

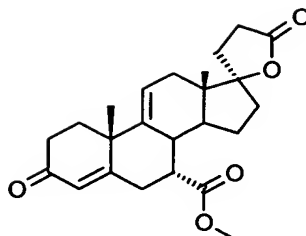
The mixture of Step A is then quenched with dimethylsulfide (340 μ l, 288 mg, 4.630 mmols, 3.66 equivalents), warmed to 20-25°, stirred at 20-25° for 50 min. to give a mixture of the title compounds.

Step C: 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone
(VI)

The mixture of Step B is then treated with hydrogen peroxide (70% aqueous, 430 μ l, 560 mg, containing 392 mg (11.52 mmols, 9.12 equivalents) of hydrogen peroxide) and a solution of potassium bicarbonate (637.7 mg, 6.369 mmols, 5.04 equivalents) in water (8 ml). The resulting two-phase mixture is diluted with enough methanol to produce a one-phase mixture (5 ml), which is then stirred at 20-25° for 16 hrs., then diluted to a volume of 500 ml with methanol for purpose of LC analysis. LC analysis indicates the title compound is obtained by comparison with a known compound.

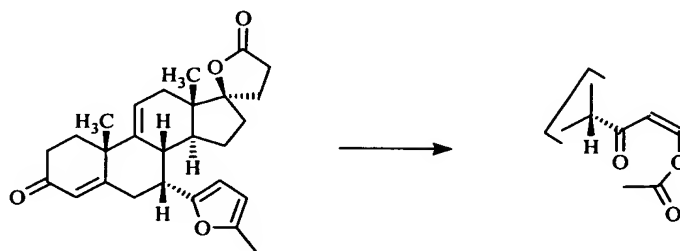
A 20.0 ml portion of the 500 ml solution was withdrawn and further diluted with methanol to a volume of 50 ml. This solution (containing 17.3 mg [0.0450 mmols] carboxylic acid by LC) is concentrated to a low volume, diluted with water, acidified with hydrochloric acid (1N), and extracted with methylene chloride (2 x). The two extracts are each washed in sequence with water, then combined and concentrated. The concentrate is taken up in methanol/toluene (1/1; 2 ml) and treated with a mixture of trimethylsilyldiazomethane, (CH₃)₃SiCHN₂, in hexane (2.0 M, 0.25 ml, 0.50 mmols, 11.1 equivalents). TLC analysis (ethyl acetate/cyclohexane; 66/34) indicates the title compound is obtained, R_f = 0.23; LC analysis (210 nm detection) indicates the same retention time as a known standard and that the title compound is obtained.

EXAMPLE 6 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -
lactone, methyl ester (VIII)



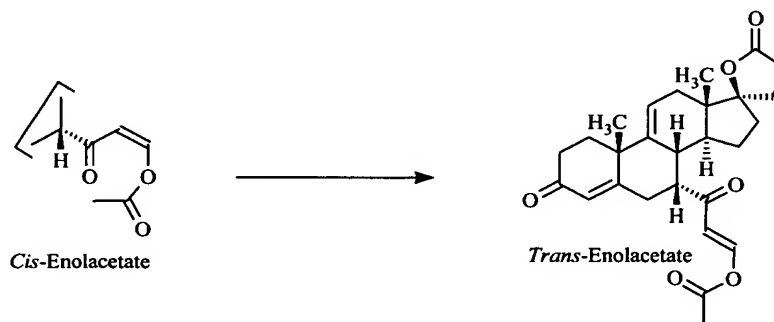
The remainder of the 500 ml mixture of Step C of EXAMPLE 5 (479 ml, containing 414.4 mg [1.0777 mmoles] 17β-hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one 7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone (VI, EXAMPLE 5C) is concentrated partially, diluted with water (20 ml), concentrated to a volume of about 20 ml, treated with hydrochloric acid (18 ml) and extracted with methylene chloride (25 ml, then 2 x 15 ml). The extracts are washed with water (30 ml), combined, and concentrated to a volume of 50.0 ml. Half of this mixture is concentrated to a low volume, diluted with ethyl acetate, and extracted with potassium bicarbonate (25% aqueous, 20 ml, then 10 ml). The extracts are combined, acidified to pH 3 with hydrochloric acid (1N) and extracted with methylene chloride (40 ml, then 2 x 15 ml). The extracts are then combined, washed with water, concentrated to a volume of <1 ml, and treated with a solution of sodium carbonate (349.6 mg, 3.298 mmoles, 6.12 equivalents based on carboxylic acid) in water (1.0 ml) followed by tetra-*n*-butylammonium bisulfate, (*n*-butyl)₄NHSO₄, (20.4 mg, 0.0601 mmoles, 0.11 equivalents) followed by dimethylsulfate (108 μl, 144.0 mg, 1.14 mmoles, 2.11 equivalents). The mixture is diluted with methylene chloride (0.1 ml), stirred at 20-25° for 11.5 hrs., treated with hydrochloric acid (1 N, 10 ml) and extracted with methylene chloride (10 ml, then 2 x 5 ml). The extracts are combined, washed with water, and concentrated to give the title compound, consistent with a known standard.

EXAMPLE 7 17β-Hydroxy-7α-(*cis*-3'-acetoxyacryloyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (X-*cis*)



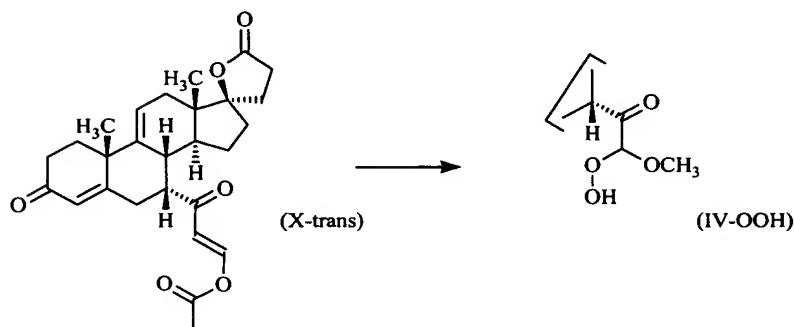
A stream of O_3/O_2 (ozone/oxygen) is passed through a cold (-78°) mixture of 17β -hydroxy- 7α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II, EXAMPLE 3, 3.0138 g, 7.1663 mmoles) in methylene chloride (40 ml) and methanol (10 ml) until the starting material had been consumed (LC, 25 min), then the mixture is purged with O_2 followed by nitrogen, quenched with trimethylphosphite (3.0 ml, 3.16 g, 25.435 mmoles, 3.55 equivalents), and warmed to $20-25^\circ$. After stirring for 1 hr., LC analysis indicates the title compound is obtained, CMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 198.49, 198.23, 176.43, 166.63, 166.10, 142.74, 142.44, 125.87, 118.12, 110.39, 94.99, 49.30, 44.47, 42.30, 40.59, ~ 40 , 35.46, 35.33, 34.11, 33.63, 32.83, 31.37, 29.11, 27.26, 23.31, 20.67 and 14.06 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 0.94, 1.40, 1.5-2.9, 2.29, 5.38, 5.63 and 7.48 δ .

EXAMPLE 8 17β -Hydroxy- 7α -(*trans*-3'-acetoxyacryloyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (X-*trans*)



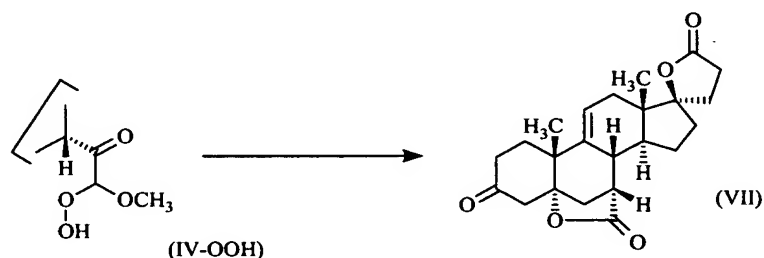
After stirring the reaction mixture of EXAMPLE 7, 17β -hydroxy- 7α -(*cis*-3'-acetoxyacryloyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (X-*cis*, EXAMPLE 7) for 1 hr., the reaction mixture is quenched with hydrochloric acid (5% aqueous, 25 ml) and stirred at $20-25^\circ$ for 20 min., at which time isomerization to *trans* is complete. The organic phase is then separated, concentrated, and flash chromatographed (silica gel, 150 g; gradient elution, 40% \rightarrow 70% ethyl acetate/cyclohexane) to give the title compound. This material is then crystallized from ethyl acetate/heptane (70/30) to give the title compound in pure form, CMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 199.25, 198.39, 176.41, 166.79, 166.39, 149.00, 142.57, 125.67, 118.20, 113.11, 94.90, 47.75, 44.40, 42.40, 40.45, ~ 40 , 35.63, 35.25, 34.01, 33.56, 32.73, 31.29, 29.04, 27.14, 23.32, 20.47 and 13.98 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 1.14, 1.4-4.1, 1.61, 2.44, 5.75, 6.14 and 8.41 δ .

EXAMPLE 9 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(2'-hydroperoxy-2'-methoxyacetyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (IV-OOH)



A stream of ozone/oxygen is passed through a cooled (-78°) mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(*trans*-3'-acetoxyacryloyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (X-*trans*, EXAMPLE 8, 311.0 mg, 0.6872 mmoles) in methylene/methanol (2/1, 6 ml) until a blue color persisted (3 min.). The excess ozone is purged with oxygen followed by nitrogen, then the reaction mixture is warmed to $20-25^{\circ}$ and diluted with methylene chloride to 10 ml. A portion of this mixture (3.5 ml, from 0.2405 mmoles *trans*-enolacetate) is concentrated to dryness to give the title compound.

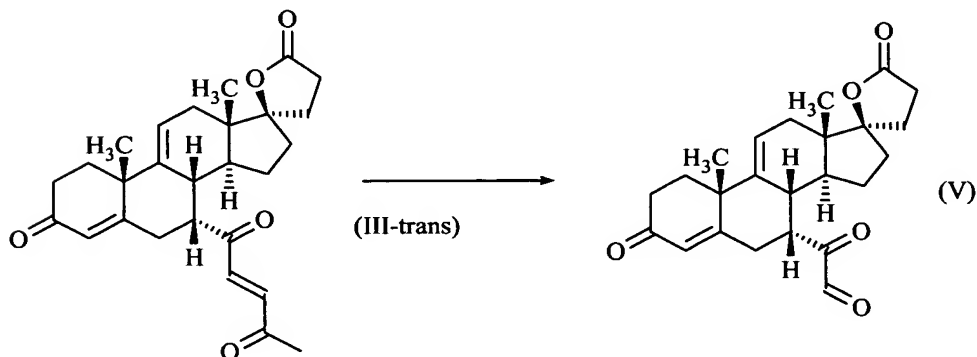
EXAMPLE 10 5 α ,17 β -Dihydroxypregn-9(11)-ene-3-one 7 α , 21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone (VII)



17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(2'-hydroperoxy-2'-methoxyacetyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (IV-OOH, EXAMPLE 9, 3.5 ml, from 0.2405 mmoles *trans*-enolacetate) is concentrated to dryness and the residue dissolved in trifluoroacetic acid (1.0 ml), stirred at $20-25^{\circ}$ for 20 min., then diluted with ethyl acetate (1.0 ml), washed with aqueous sodium bicarbonate, diluted with methylene chloride (2.0 ml), washed with diluted aqueous hydrochloric acid and concentrated. The concentrate is taken up in methylene

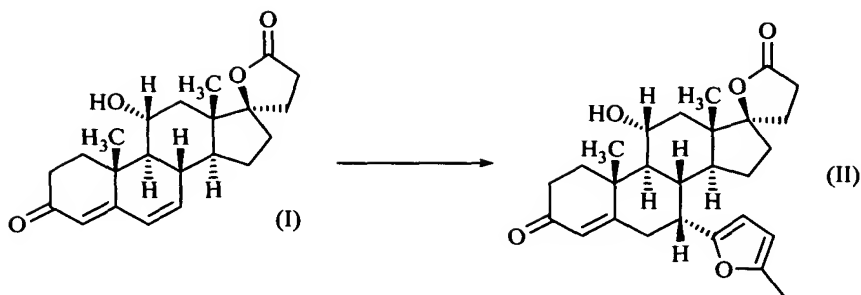
chloride (1.0 ml), stirred with aqueous hydrochloric acid (6N) for 30 min, then concentrated to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) 206.39, 176.80, 175.59, 139.66, 124.11, 95.12, 91.11, 47.14, 43.99, 42.45, 41.66, 41.63, 41.15, 39.01, 37.04, 35.23, 33.08, 32.50, 31.42, 29.21, 23.16, 23.06 and 14.30 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) 0.94, 1.40, 1.5 – 2.6, 2.80, 5.70 δ ; MS (CI, NH_3) m/e = 402 (100%, $\text{P} + \text{NH}_4$).

EXAMPLE 11 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(2'-oxo-acetyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (V)



A stream of ozone/oxygen is passed through a cooled (-79°) mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(*trans*-1',4'-dioxopent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*trans*, EXAMPLE 4B, 503.4 mg, 1.1531 mmoles) in methylene chloride/methanol (1/1, 4.0 ml) until TLC analysis (acetone/methylene chloride, 3/7) indicates that conversion of starting material (R_f = 0.70) to a more polar product (R_f = 0.45) is complete (10 min.). The reaction mixture is then quenched with dimethylsulfide (0.20 ml, 169 mg, 2.72 mmoles, 2.34 equivalents), stirred at 20-25 $^\circ$ for 1 hr., and then concentrated. The concentrate is flash chromatographed (silica gel, 60 g; gradient elution, acetone/methylene chloride 5% \rightarrow 25%) to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CD_3CN) 198.68, 197.54, 187.93, 176.09, 166.40, 142.33, 125.02, 118.56, 94.44, ~44, 42.49, 40.34, ~40, 39.87, 34.60, 33.83, 33.56, 33.32, 32.39, 30.53, 28.39, 26.16, 22.43 and 13.22 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CD_3CN) 0.87, 1.37, 1.2-2.9, 5.49, 5.63 and 8.93 δ ; MS (CI, NH_3) m/e = 397 ($\text{P} + \text{H}$, 100%).

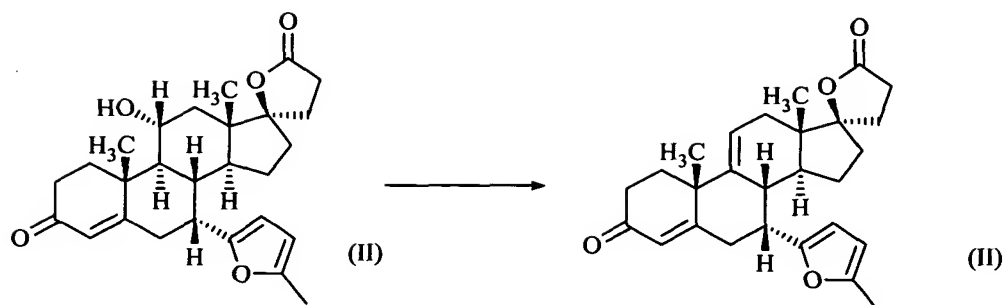
EXAMPLE 12 11 α ,17 β -Dihydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



A mixture of 11 α -hydroxycanrenone (I, 30.00 g, 84.1586 mmoles) in nitromethane (240 ml) and methylene chloride (60 ml) is cooled to -20° then treated with 2-methylfuran (15.6 ml, 14.20 g, 0.1729 moles, 2.05 equivalents) followed by ethanol (5.1 ml, 4.03 g, 87.454 mmoles, 1.04 equivalents) followed by boron trifluoride diethyl etherate ($\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$, 12.0 ml, 13.44 g, 94.695 mmoles, 1.13 equivalents). The reaction mixture is stirred at -17° for 20 hrs., then quenched with ammonia (15% aqueous, 60 ml), extracted with methylene chloride (120 ml), dried over sodium sulfate (40 g) and concentrated. The concentrate is dissolved in methylene chloride/ethyl acetate (1/1, 300 ml) concentrated to a volume of 75 ml, diluted with 150 ml cyclohexane, concentrated to a volume of 200 ml, and filtered to give the title compound, CMR (75 MHz, CDCl_3) 199.59, 176.67, 170.11, 152.92, 150.28, 126.20, 108.67, 105.90, 95.18, 68.55, 52.05, 45.84, 45.58, 43.08, 39.73, 38.62, 38.42, 37.47, 36.54, 35.26, 34.17, 30.91, 29.05, 22.62, 18.40, 15.58 and 13.44 δ ; NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3) 1.01, 1.1-3.2, 1.41, 2.20, 4.12, 5.73, 5.83 and 5.93 δ .

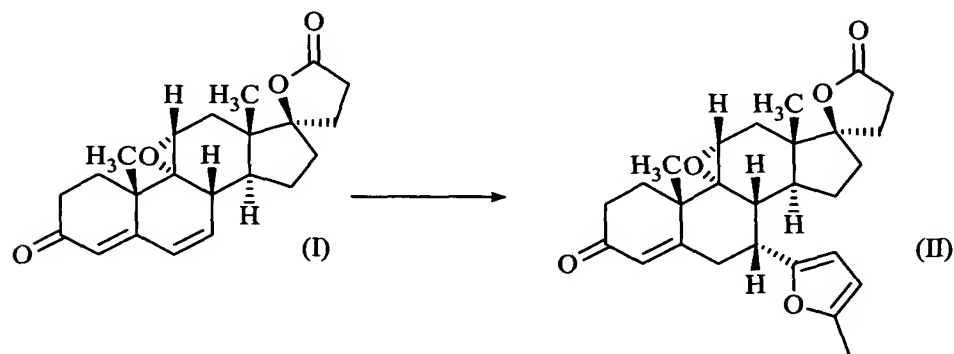
The filtrate is concentrated. The concentrate is taken up in ethyl acetate (30 ml warm), cooled to 10° , and filtered to give a second crop of crystal of the title compound.

EXAMPLE 13 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



A mixture of 11 α ,17 β -dihydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II, EXAMPLE 12, 438.3 mg, 0.9994 mmoles) in THF (7.3 ml) is cooled to -50° , then treated all at once with solid phosphorous pentachloride, (PCl₅, 287.5 mg, 1.381 mmoles, 1.38 equivalents). After stirring for 42 min., analysis by LC indicates that conversion to the title compound is complete. After another 21 min., the mixture is quenched with water (22 ml) and warmed to 20-25 $^{\circ}$. After 20 min., the mixture is extracted with methylene chloride (2 x 15 ml), dried over magnesium sulfate, and concentrated to give the title compound, identified by LC retention time comparison with a sample from EXAMPLE 3.

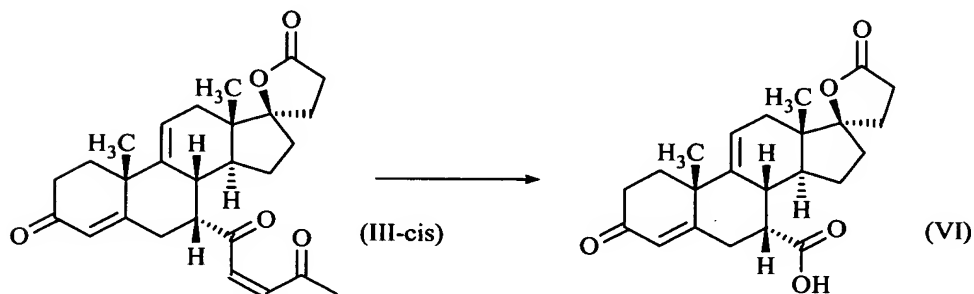
EXAMPLE 14 9 α ,11 α -Epoxy-17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



A mixture of 9 α ,11 α -epoxycanrenone (I, *J. Med. Chem.*, 6, 732 (1963) and *Helv. Chim. Acta* 80, 566 (1997), 10.0135 g, 28.2508 mmoles) in nitromethane (80 ml) and methylene chloride (20 ml) is cooled to -20° then treated with 2-methylfuran (5.10 ml, 4.64 g, 56.529 mmoles, 2.00 equivalents) followed by ethanol (1.7 ml, 1.343 g, 29.151 mmoles, 1.03

equivalents) followed by boron trifluoride diethyl etherate ($\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$, 3.6 ml, 4.03 g, 28.408 mmoles, 1.01 equivalents). The reaction mixture is stirred at -20° for 24 hrs., at which time conversion to the product is complete as determined by LC, so the reaction is quenched with aqueous ammonia (15%, 10 ml), extracted with methylene chloride (2 x 100 ml), and concentrated to a residue which is flash chromatographed (560 g silica gel; gradient elution, 50% \rightarrow 90% ethyl acetate/cyclohexane). The material obtained by chromatography is triturated with cyclohexane (100 ml) at reflux for two hrs., then cooled to 0° and filtered to give the title compound, CMR (75 MHz, CDCl_3) 198.10, 176.26, 165.67, 153.19, 149.96, 127.56, 107.92, 106.14, 94.66, 65.45, 49.92, 43.82, 40.00, 39.18, 37.43, 37.37, 35.54, 35.00, 33.24, 31.00, 30.81, 28.91, 26.98, 22.26, 22.00, 16.61 and 13.47 δ ; NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3) 1.02, 1.3-3.0, 1.52, 2.20, 3.28, 5.85, 5.92 and 6.01 δ . The assigned structure is confirmed by X-ray crystallography.

EXAMPLE 15 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone (VI) via direct ozonization of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(*cis*-4'-oxo-pent-2'-enoyl)-3-oxo-pregna-4,9(11)-diene-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*cis*)



A stream of ozone/oxygen is passed through a cooled (-55°) mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(*cis*-4'-oxo-pent-2'-enoyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (III-*cis*, EXAMPLE 4 Step A, 52.4 mg, 0.1200 mmoles) in methylene chloride/isopropyl alcohol (1/1, 3.0 ml) containing water (50 mg, 2.77 mmoles, 23.1 equivalents) until disappearance of starting material is complete by LC (126 secs.). The reaction mixture is then quenched with dimethylsulfide (0.033 ml, 27.9 mg, 0.449 mmoles, 3.74 equivalents), stirred at $20-25^\circ$ for 45 min., then diluted with methanol (5 ml), treated with aqueous hydrogen peroxide (70%, 50 μl ,

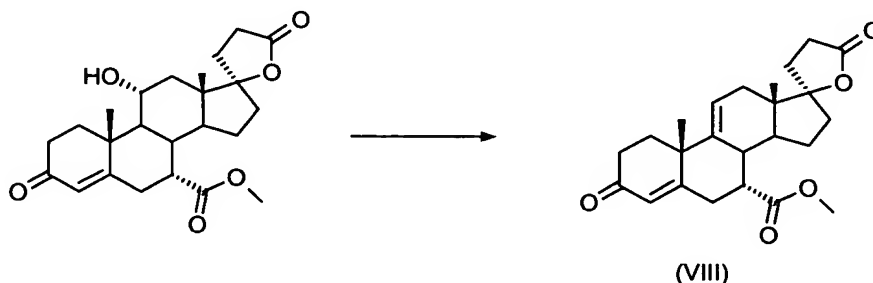
Chemical reaction scheme showing the conversion of compound (III-trans) to compound (VI). Compound (III-trans) is a complex steroid with a trans-alkene at C5-C6, a ketone at C3, and a side chain at C17. Compound (VI) is the product, where the side chain has been modified, notably with the formation of a new hydroxyl group at C17.

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EXAMPLE 17 5 α ,17 β -Dihydroxypregn-9(11)-ene-3-one 7 α , 21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone, 3-dimethyl ketal (VII-ketal)

5 α ,17 β -Dihydroxypregn-9(11)-ene-3-one 7 α , 21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone (VII, EXAMPLE 10) is treated with at least one equivalent of trimethyl ortho formate in the presence of a catalytic amount of *p*-toluenesulfonic acid by the procedure of International Publication WO98/25948, to give the title compound.

EXAMPLE 18 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (VIII)



10 11 α ,17 β -dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (VIII, *Drugs of the Future*, 24(5), 488-501 (1999), compound (VI)), 5.00g, 12.0 mmol) is mixed with acetonitrile (15ml). N-(1,1,2,3,3,3)hexafluoropropyl)- diethylamine (V, 2.55 ml, 14.4 mmol) is added to this the steroid mixture and heated to 60° for 2.5 hours. The resulting mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with methanol (100 μ L). A saturated aqueous solution of potassium bicarbonate (15 ml) is added. The acetonitrile is then removed under reduced pressure. The resulting mixture is extracted with methylene chloride (3 x 10 ml). The combined organic phases are washed with a aqueous solution of sodium chloride (10%, 20 ml). The solvent is dried with magnesium sulfate. The solvent is exchanged from methylene chloride to methyl *t*-butyl ether (MTBE). The mixture is concentrated to a final volume of 25 ml. The resulting slurry is stirred overnight and the final product, the title compound, is collected by filtration.

EXAMPLE 19 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (VIII)

11 α ,17 β -dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (VIII, 5.00 g, 12.0 mmol) is placed in a flask with acetonitrile (15ml). To this mixture N-

(1,1,2,3,3,3)hexafluoropropyl)- diethylamine (2.55 ml, 14.4 mmol) is added and heated to 60° for 2 hrs. The mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with aqueous potassium bicarbonate (20% solution, 18 ml). The acetonitrile is removed under reduced pressure, the aqueous layer is extracted with methylene chloride (3 x 5 ml). The combined
 5 organic phases are washed with sodium chloride solution (10%, 10ml). The solvent is exchanged from methylene chloride to methyl isobutyl ketone/heptane to crystallize the title compound, mp = 198.6-199.5°; MS (m/z) calculated for C₂₄H₃₀O₅ = 398.5 (M⁺), found 398.9(M⁺); NMR (CDCl₃) 5.69, 5.64, 3.62, 2.97, 2.84-1.47, 1.38 and 0.93 δ; CMR (CDCl₃) 98.5, 176.4, 172.5, 166.5, 142.3, 125.6, 118.9, 95.0, 51.3, 43.0, 40.3, 35.6, 35.2, 34.1, 33.7,
 10 32.8, 31.2, 29.0, 27.1, 23.2 and 14.0 δ.

EXAMPLE 20 17β-hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone, methyl ester (VIII)

11α,17β-dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone, methyl ester (VIII, 80.00 g, 192.1mmol) is placed in a flask with acetonitrile (80ml). To this mixture N-(1,1,2,3,3,3)hexafluoropropyl)- diethylamine (40.8 ml, 224.8 mmol) is added and heated
 15 slowly to 45 to 50°, then held for 1-2 hours. The mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with aqueous potassium bicarbonate (72 g in 288 ml). Methylene chloride (240 ml) is added and after mixing the layers are separated. The aqueous phase is extracted with methylene chloride (100ml). The combined organic phases are washed with water (240 ml).
 20 The solvent is exchanged from methylene chloride to methyl *tert*-butyl ether, and branched octane is added drop wise to crystallize the product which is the title compound.

EXAMPLE 21 17β-Hydroxy-7α-(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 3, using the same reactants and
 25 making non-critical variations, the title compound is obtained, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 198.56, 176.53, 167.45, 152.74, 149.99, 142.84, 126.24, 119.73, 107.12, 105.89, 95.19, 44.08, 42.39, 41.90, 40.78, 38.52, 37.57, 35.39, 34.18, 33.93, 32.93, 31.26, 29.14, 26.83, 23.18, 14.12 and 13.38 δ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 0.95, 1.43, 1.4-2.6, 2.16, 2.93 and 5.7 δ.

EXAMPLE 22 17β-Hydroxy-7α-(*cis*-1',4'-dioxopent-2'-en-1'yl)pregna-4,9-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (III-*cis*)
 30

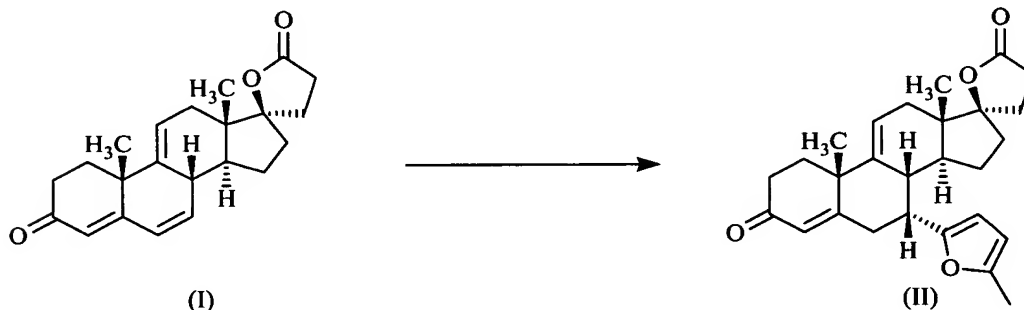
Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 4, Step A, using the same reactants and making non-critical variations, the title compound is obtained,

CMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) 202.28, ~200, 199.05, 177.19, 166.56, 142.34, 138.49, 134.39, 126.37, 119.90, 95.57, 49.63, 44.90, 42.39, 41.08, 41.04, 35.82, 35.75, 34.49, 34.07, 33.25, 31.71, 30.12, 29.64, 27.49, 23.76 and 14.34 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) 0.93, 1.40, 1.4-2.9, 2.24, 5.66, 5.72, 6.15 and 6.28 δ .

EXAMPLE 23 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(2'-hydroperoxy-2'-methoxyacetyl)pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (IV-OOH)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 9, using the same reactants and making non-critical variations, the title compound is obtained, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) 203.54, 199.91, 177.51, 168.98, 142.42, 125.05, 117.89, 105.90, 95.58, 55.82, 44.21, 44.21, 42.17, 41.21, 40.37, 35.33, 34.84, 33.62, 33.16, 32.38, 30.79, 28.84, 26.72, 23.02 and 13.55 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) 0.94, 1.42, 1.4-2.8, 3.57, 4.34, 4.75 and 5.63 δ .

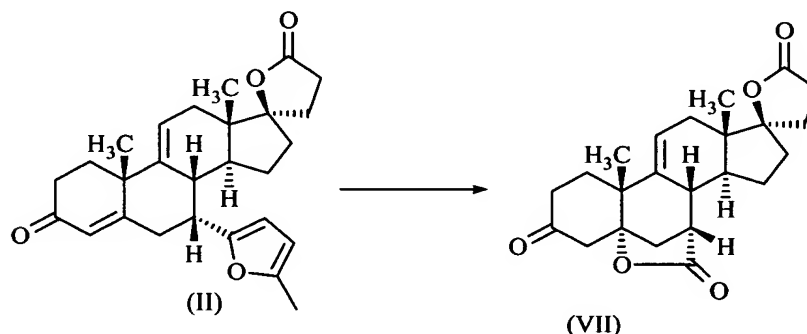
EXAMPLE 24 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



A mixture of Δ^9 -canrenone (I, 105 g, 0.31024 moles) in acetonitrile (450 ml) is treated with ethanol (21.0 g, 0.4558 moles, 1.47 equivalents), isopropanol (1.5 ml, 1.177 g, 19.592 mmol, 0.063 equivalents), and 2-methylfuran (48.5 g, 0.5907 moles, 1.90 equivalents), then cooled to -18° and treated with boron trifluoride diethyl etherate (63.0 g, 0.4439 moles, 1.43 equivalents) over 4 hours. After stirring at -18° for 24 hrs., the mixture is quenched with triethylamine (38.0 g, 0.3755 moles, 1.21 equivalents) and concentrated to a thick slurry, which is diluted with water (350 ml), extracted with methylene chloride (400 ml), washed with water (350 ml), then concentrated, *n*-propyl acetate added, and further concentrated to give a slurry, which is cooled to 0° , filtered, and the cake washed with *n*-propyl

acetate/methyl-*t*-butyl ether (1/1) followed by methyl-*t*-butyl ether to give the title compound, identified by LC retention time comparison with a sample from EXAMPLE 3.

EXAMPLE 25 5 α ,17 β -Dihydroxypregn-9(11)-ene-3-one, 7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone (VII)



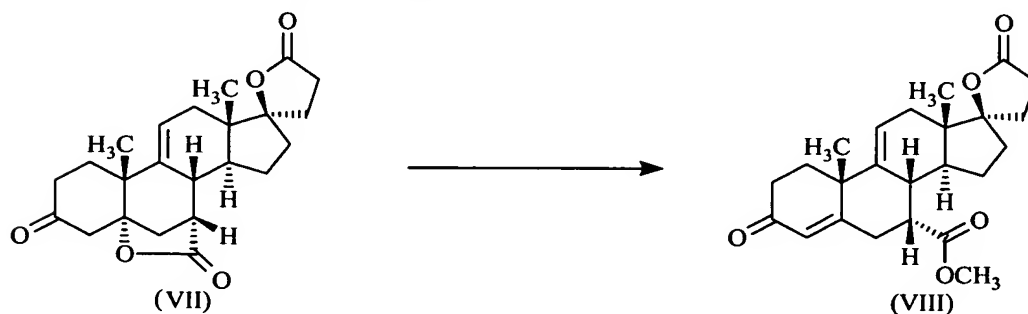
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A mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II, EXAMPLE 24, 100 g, 0.23778 moles) and potassium acetate (50.0 g, 0.5094 moles, 2.14 equivalents) in acetone (500 ml) and water (150 ml) is cooled to -10° and treated with a slurry of dibromantin (34.0 g, 0.1189 moles, 0.50 molar equivalents) in water (100 ml) until a rise in the redox potential occurred. At this point, LC analysis indicated complete conversion into enedione (III-*cis*). The reaction mixture containing the enedione (III-*cis*) is then quenched with isobutyl vinyl ether (1.0 ml, 0.768 g, 7.668 mmoles, 0.032 equivalents), concentrated to a thick slurry, diluted with methylene chloride (200 ml), and treated with 20° concentrated hydrochloric acid (50.0 ml, 0.50 moles, 2.10 equivalents). The mixture is stirred at $20-25^{\circ}$ for 2 hrs., at which time LC analysis indicated complete conversion to enedione (III-*trans*). The organic phase containing the enedione (III-*trans*) is separated, diluted with methylene chloride (80 ml) and methanol (300 ml), and cooled to -48° . A stream of O_3/O_2 is bubbled through this mixture until LC analysis indicated complete disappearance of the enedione (III-*trans*), then the mixture is quenched with dimethylsulfide (30.0 ml, 25.38 g, 0.4085 moles, 1.72 equivalents), stirred at -20° for 16 hrs., concentrated to a volume of about 300 ml, diluted with methanol (350 ml), concentrated to a volume of about 300 ml, diluted with isopropanol (40 ml) and methanol (80 ml), then treated with a warm ($55-60^{\circ}$) solution of potassium bicarbonate (120 g, 1.1986 moles, 5.04 equivalents) in water (240 ml). This slurry is cooled to $5-10^{\circ}$, then hydrogen peroxide (50%, 66.0 g, containing 33.0 g

20

(0.9703 moles, 4.08 equivalents) hydrogen peroxide) is added over 3 hrs. The mixture is stirred for four hrs. and quenched with dimethylsulfide (40 ml, 33.84 g, 0.5447 moles, 2.29 equivalents). After stirring at 20-25° for 23 hrs., the mixture is diluted with methylene chloride (100 ml) and water (80 ml), and acidified to pH = 3.0 with concentrated hydrochloric acid. The two-phase mixture is heated to 36°, then the phases are separated and the aqueous phase extracted with methylene chloride (100 ml). The organic phases are combined, washed with water (75 ml), and the aqueous phase is back-extracted with methylene chloride (25 ml). The organic phases are combined, concentrated to a volume of 150 ml, then treated with benzenesulfonic acid (1.0 g of 90% pure material, containing 0.90 g (5.690 mmoles, 0.0239 equivalents) benzenesulfonic acid) and acetone (50 ml). The mixture is then concentrated atmospherically to a volume of 160 ml, then diluted with acetone (250 ml), concentrated to a volume of 200 ml, cooled to 12°, and filtered. The filter cake is washed with cold acetone (2 x 25 ml) and dried by nitrogen stream to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 206.08, 176.47, 175.41, 139.63, 124.00, 94.89, 90.97, 47.08, 43.90, 42.36, 41.58, 41.07, 38.93, 36.97, 35.16, 33.01, 32.42, 32.42, 31.35, 29.10, 23.08, 22.98 and 14.23 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 0.94, 1.40, 1.4-2.8 and 5.70; MS (CI, NH₃) m/e = 385 (P + H, 100%).

EXAMPLE 26 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -carbomethoxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (VIII)

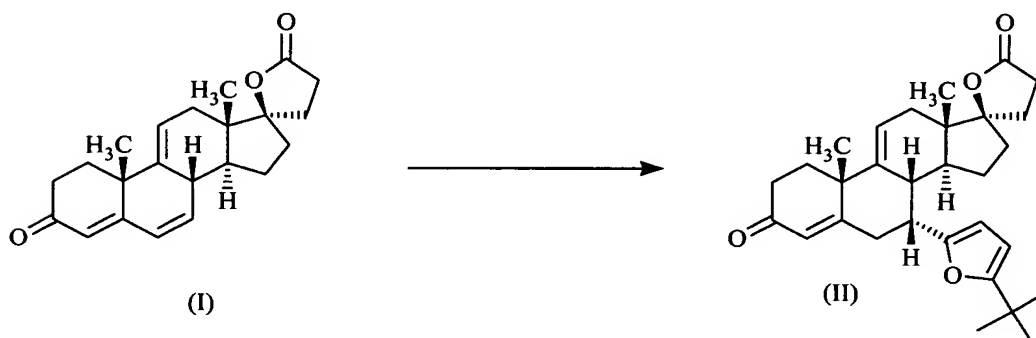


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A mixture of 5 α ,17 β -dihydroxypregna-9(11)-ene-3-one, 7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone (VII, EXAMPLE 25, 50.0 g, 0.13005 moles) and potassium bicarbonate (16.92 g, 0.1690 moles, 1.30 equivalents) in acetone (200 ml) and water (100 ml) is stirred at 45° for 2 hrs., at which time conversion of the 5,7-lactone (VII) into the carboxylic acid (VI) is

complete by LC. The resulting mixture is then treated with dimethylsulfate (22.92 g, 0.1817 moles, 1.40 equivalents), stirred at 45° for 3 hrs., then treated with a solution of potassium bicarbonate (1.3 g, 0.0130 moles, 0.100 equivalents) in water (10 ml) followed by neat triethylamine (1.81 ml, 1.314 g, 0.0130 moles, 0.100 equivalents). The mixture is stirred at 45° for 1 hr., quenched with concentrated hydrochloric acid (1.92 ml, 2.304 g, containing 0.852 g (0.0234 moles, 0.180 equivalents) hydrochloric acid), cooled to 0°, concentrated under reduced pressure to a volume of 150 ml (pot temperature 13°), then filtered and the filter cake is washed with water (2 x 25 ml) and dried to give the title compound, by comparison with an authentic sample by LC.

10 EXAMPLE 27 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(5'-*t*-butyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

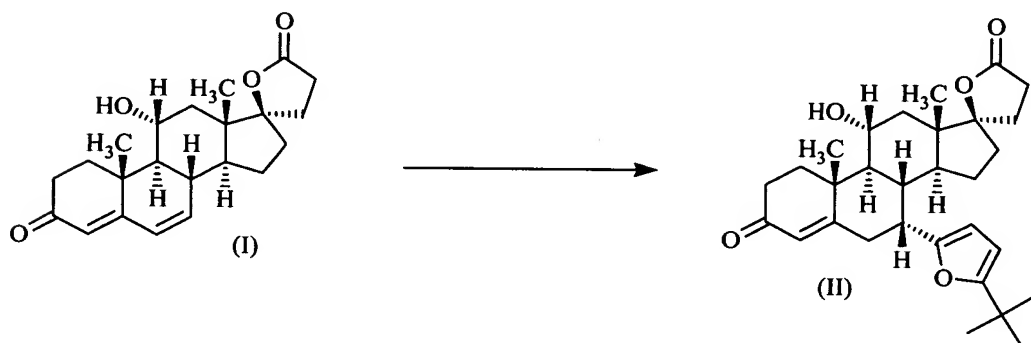


A mixture of Δ^9 -canrenone (I, 3.0002 g, 8.8645 mmoles) and 2-*t*-butylfuran (2.53 ml, 2.204 g, 17.745 mmoles, 2.00 equivalents) in nitromethane (12.0 ml) is treated with ethanol (0.52 ml, 413 mg, 8.96 mmoles, 1.01 equivalents), cooled to -20°, and treated with boron trifluoride diethyl etherate (1.24 ml, 1.389 g, 9.785 mmoles, 1.10 equivalents). The resulting mixture is stirred at -20° for 24 hrs., then at -5° for 12 hrs., then at 0° for 4 hrs., at which time the reaction appeared about 90% complete by TLC. The reaction is quenched with ammonium hydroxide (7%, 30 ml) extracted with methylene chloride (3 x 50 ml), dried over magnesium sulfate, and concentrated. The concentrate is flash chromatographed on (silica gel, 150 g; gradient elution, 10% \rightarrow 50% ethyl acetate/cyclohexane). The fractions containing pure product are combined and concentrated to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 198.56, 176.53, 167.87, 162.48, 153.02, 142.91, 125.84, 119.42, 106.70, 101.88, 95.21, 44.05, 42.87, 41.90, 40.84, 38.17, 37.80, 35.52, 34.20, 34.02, 32.97, 32.40,

31.33, 29.18, 28.71, 26.79, 23.17 and 14.14 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) 0.95, 1.16, 1.45, 1.5 – 2.6, 2.94, 3.30, 5.64, 5.72 and 5.76 δ .

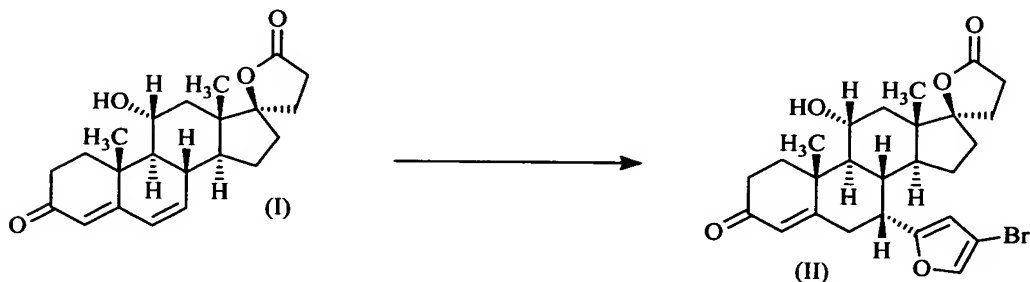
EXAMPLE 28 11 α ,17 β -Dihydroxy-7 α -(5'-*t*-butyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

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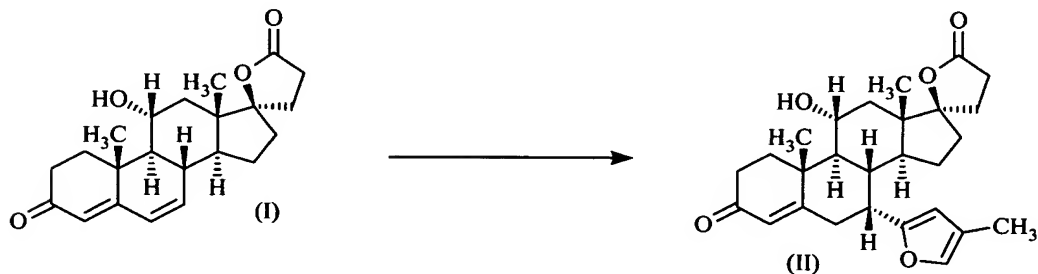
A mixture of 11 α -hydroxycanrenone (I, 2.03 g, 5.6947 mmoles) and 2-*t*-butylfuran (1.70 ml, 1.481 g, 11.924 mmoles, 2.09 equivalents) in nitromethane (16 ml) is cooled to –20°, treated with ethanol (0.35 ml, 0.276 g, 5.99 mmoles, 1.05 equivalents) and boron trifluoride diethyl etherate (0.83 ml, 0.930 g, 6.550 mmoles, 1.15 equivalents), and stirred at
 10 –20° for 21 hrs., at which time LC analysis indicates that the reaction is complete. The reaction mixture is then quenched with ammonium hydroxide (15%, 5.5 ml), diluted with water, extracted with methylene chloride (2 x 25 ml), dried over magnesium sulfate, filtered through 5.0 g magnesol, and concentrated to a foam, which is flash chromatographed (silica
 15 gel, 200 g; gradient elution 20% → 70% ethyl acetate/cyclohexane). The fractions containing the product are combined and concentrated to give the title compound, UV λ_{max} = 238 m μ .

EXAMPLE 29 11 α ,17 β -Dihydroxy-7 α -(4'-bromo-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



A mixture of 11 α -hydroxycanrenone (I, 2.0 g, 5.6425 mmoles), ethylene glycol (0.84 ml, 0.935 g, 15.06 mmoles, 2.67 equivalents), and 3-bromofuran (3.0 ml, 4.905 g, 33.372 mmoles, 5.91 equivalents) in nitromethane (32 ml) at 20-25° is treated with boron trifluoride diethyl etherate (1.4 ml, 1.568 g, 11.048 mmoles, 1.96 equivalents) and stirred at 20-25° for 20 hrs., at which time the reaction is > 80% complete by LC. The reaction is then quenched with water, extracted with ethyl acetate, and concentrated to give a foam, which is dissolved in methylene chloride (10 ml) and flash chromatographed (silica gel, 150 g; gradient elution 0 → 6% isopropanol/methylene chloride). The product-containing fractions are then combined and rechromatographed (silica gel, 100 g silica gel; gradient elution 0 → 5% isopropanol/methylene chloride). The product-containing fractions are combined and crystallized from ethyl acetate/cyclohexane (1/2) to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 199.77, 176.54, 168.67, 152.83, 142.43, 126.05, 113.41, 98.03, 95.02, 69.19, 53.51, 46.26, 46.19, 43.40, 39.57, 38.72, 38.05, 37.48, 35.39, 34.77, 34.24, 31.09, 29.11, 22.68, 18.46 and 15.84 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 0.9 – 2.9, 1.03, 1.42, 3.35, 4.11, 6.36 and 7.26 δ ; MS (CI, NH₃) m/e = 503, 505 (100%, P + H).

EXAMPLE 30 11 α ,17 β -Dihydroxy-7 α -(4'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



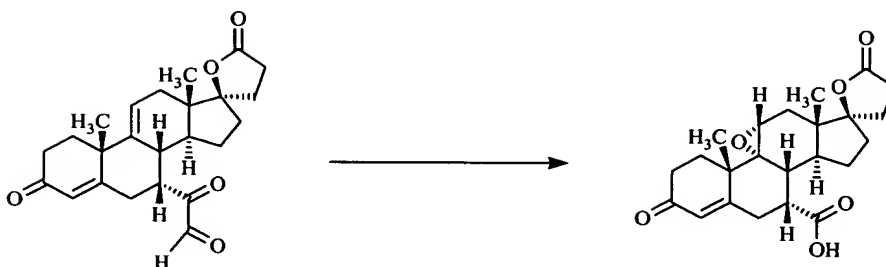
A mixture of 11 α -hydroxycanrenone (I, 816 mg, 2.2891 mmoles) and 3-methylfuran (4.0 ml of 1.218 M solution in nitromethane, 4.87 mmoles, 2.13 equivalents) in nitromethane (4.0 ml) is cooled to -20° and treated with ethylene glycol (0.168 ml, 187 mg, 3.01 mmoles, 1.32 equivalents) followed by boron trifluoride diethyl etherate (0.284 ml, 318 mg, 2.241 mmoles, 0.98 equivalents). The resulting mixture is stirred at -20° for 20 hrs., at which time the reaction is 86% complete by LC. The reaction mixture is quenched with aqueous ammonium hydroxide (15%, 4 ml) diluted with water (10 ml), extracted with methylene chloride (2 x 20 ml), dried over magnesium sulfate, and concentrated. The concentrate is

flash chromatographed (silica gel, 60 g; gradient elution 50% → 100% ethyl acetate/cyclohexane). The product-containing fractions are combined and concentrated. The concentrate is crystallized from cyclohexane/ethyl acetate (4/1) to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 199.91, 176.62, 170.02, 150.94, 140.81, 125.57, 115.27, 112.29, 95.07, 69.16, 53.50, 46.13, 45.99, 43.24, 39.52, 39.46, 38.14, 37.35, 35.32, 34.18, 31.05, 29.07, 22.28, 18.46, 15.79 and 10.21 δ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 1.04, 1.0 – 2.9, 1.42, 1.96, 3.14, 4.12, 5.34, 6.12 and 7.15 δ; MS (CI, NH₃) m/e = 439 (100%, P + H).

EXAMPLE 31. 17β-Hydroxy-7α-(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (II)

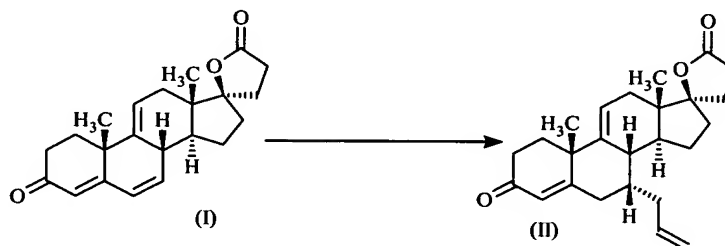
Ishikawa reagent (2.4 mK, 13.7 mmol) is added to a mixture of 11α,17β-dihydroxy-7α-(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregn-4-en-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (II, EXAMPLE 12, 5 g, 11.4 mmol) in acetonitrile (25 mL). The mixture is heated to 60° and is determined complete in 1 hr by HPLC. The resulting mixture is cooled to 22° and quenched with saturated aqueous sodium bicarbonate (15 mL). The organic solvent is removed under reduced pressure and replaced with methylene chloride (50 mL). The organic phase is separated, washed with water (30 mL) and concentrated to a volume of 20 mL. Water (30 mL) is added and the mixture is concentrated to a volume of 20 mL. This water distillation is repeated twice to remove the N,N-diethyl-2,3,3,3-tetrafluoropropionamide by-product. Then, methylene chloride (30 mL) is added to the resulting slurry to dissolve all solids. The organic layer is separated and the solvent is exchanged to *n*-propyl acetate to a final volume of 17-18 mL. The resulting slurry is cooled to -20° for 12 hours. The product was collected by filtration and dried under ambient nitrogen to give the title compound, mp = 198-203°; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 5.737, 5.690, 3.300, 2.904, 2.164, 1.431, 0.952 and 2.569-1.358 δ; CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 198.5, 176.5, 167.4, 152.7, 150.0, 142.8, 126.2, 119.7, 107.1, 105.9, 95.2, 44.1, 42.4, 41.9, 38.5, 37.6, 35.4, 33.9, 32.9, 31.3, 29.1, 26.8, 23.2, 14.1 and 13.4 δ; MS calculated for C₂₇H₃₃O₄ = 421.238 (M + H⁺), found = 421.2 m/z.

EXAMPLE 32 9α,11α-Epoxy-17β-hydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone (VI)



A mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(2'-oxoacetyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (V, EXAMPLE 11, 6.7 mg, 0.0169 mmols) in methylene chloride (0.5 ml) is treated with peracetic acid (35%, 4 μ l, containing 1.58 mg, 0.0208 mmols, 1.23 equivalents of peracetic acid), stirred at 20-25° for 25 hours, then treated with more peracetic acid (35%, 2 μ l, containing 79 mg, 0.0104 mmols, 0.62 equivalents of peracetic acid), then stirred at 20-25° for 49 hrs., at which time LC analysis indicated conversion to the title compound, LC-UV (λ_{max} = 244 nm); LC-MS (m/e 400).

EXAMPLE 33 7 α -Allyl-17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one, 21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)



A mixture of 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,6,9(11)-trien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (I, 1.0171 g, 3.0052 mmols) in methylene chloride (62 ml) is cooled to -30° and treated with titanium tetrachloride in methylene chloride (1.0 M, 15.0 ml, 15.0 mmols, 4.99 equivalents). The resulting mixture is treated with allyltrimethylsilane (3.0 ml, 2.16 g, 18.876 mmols, 6.28 equivalents) and stirred at -30° for 4 hrs., at which time conversion of the starting material into the product (R_f = 0.27) is nearly complete by TLC (ethyl acetate/cyclohexane, 35/65). The reaction mixture is quenched with water (25 ml), extracted with methylene chloride (3 x 25 ml), and concentrated. The concentrate (weight = 1.6262 g) is flash chromatographed (silica silica gel, 150 g; gradient elution with ethyl acetate/cyclohexane, 15% \rightarrow 55%). The fractions containing the more polar product (R_f = 0.27) are combined and concentrated to give

the title compound, UV $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 241$ nm; CMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) 198.65, 176.46, 167.31, 143.22, 136.36, 126.51, 119.84, 116.80, 95.22, 44.15, 42.50, 41.13, 40.73, 37.33, 35.56, 35.43, 34.13, 33.78, 33.05, 31.65, 31.37, 29.14, 26.86, 23.04, and 13.78 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) 0.94, 1.37, 1.4 – 2.6, 4.95, 5.01, 5.65 and 5.74 δ ; MS (CI, NH_3), $m/e = 381$ (P + H, 100%);

The product is rechromatographed (silica gel, 60 g; gradient elution with ethyl acetate/cyclohexane, 15% \rightarrow 45%) to remove a more polar impurity ($R_f = 0.06$). The product-containing fractions are combined and concentrated. A portion of the residue (96.8 mg) is taken up in methylene chloride (1 ml), diluted with ethyl acetate (2 ml), concentrated to a volume of less than 1 ml, and cooled to 0°. The supernatant is decanted and the crystals recrystallized from ethyl acetate at 0°. An X-ray crystallographic study confirmed the assignment as 7 α -allyl-17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one, 21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone.

EXAMPLE 34 5 α ,17 β -Dihydroxypregn-9(11)-ene-3-one, 7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone (VII)

Step (1) - 17 β -Hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone (VI)

A mixture of 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II, EXAMPLE 3, 20 g, 47.5568 mmoles) in methanol (60 ml) and methylene chloride (60 ml) is cooled to -55°. Ozone in oxygen is bubbled through this mixture until 0.8 area % (by LC) of starting material (II) remains. The mixture is purged of ozone by sparging with nitrogen and then quenched with dimethylsulfide (16 ml, 13.5 g, 217.9 mmoles, 4.58 equivalents), warmed to 20-25°, stirred at 20-25° for 50 min. The resulting mixture is concentrated to 80 ml, methanol (25 ml) is added, and concentrated to 80 ml again. The mixture is then treated, at 5°, with a solution of potassium bicarbonate (21.6g; 215.7 mmoles; 4.54 equivalents) in water (44 ml) followed by hydrogen peroxide (50% aqueous, 23.5 g, containing 11.75 g (345.5 mmoles, 7.27 equivalents) of hydrogen peroxide). After warming to 20-30° for one hour the mixture is quenched with dimethylsulfide (8 ml, 6.75 g, 108.95 mmoles, 2.29 equivalents). Methylene chloride (20 ml) is added, and the pH adjusted to 3 with hydrogen chloride (31.5% aqueous, 26.0g containing 8.19g (224.4 mmoles; 4.72 equivalents) of hydrogen chloride. The mixture is warmed to dissolve and the phases separated. The upper aqueous phase is extracted with methylene chloride (10 ml) and the

combined organic phases are extracted with water (10 ml.). LC was performed on the methylene chloride mixture (after aqueous workup) under the following conditions:

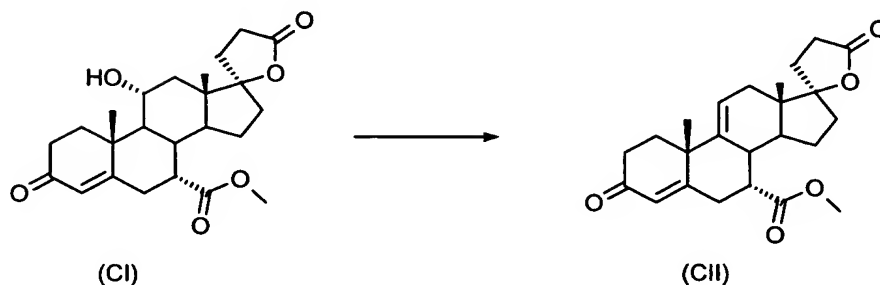
	Column:	Supelco Discovery RP Amide C16; 5 μ ; 250 mm x 4 mm
	Flow:	1 ml/min
5	Detection:	UV; 240 nm
	Mobile Phase:	A: 950 g Water; 39 g Acetonitrile; 1.0g Trifluoroacetic acid B: 754 g Acetonitrile; 39 g Water; 1.0g Trifluoroacetic acid
	Gradient:	T ₀ : 80% A/20%B T ₁₅ : 20% A/80%B T _{15.1} : 80% A/20%B T ₂₀ : 80% A/20%B
10	Run Time:	20 minutes
	Flow:	1 ml/min
	Injection Volume:	5 λ
15	Sample Prep:	5 λ or reaction mixture into 1ml of 1/1 Acetonitrile: phosphate buffer (1 ml phosphoric acid in 1 l water; pH to 2.4 with sodium hydroxide)

The reaction LC major peak (72 area %) was at 10.52 minutes; retention time of a known standard of the carboxylic acid (VI) is 10.52 minutes.

20 Step (2) - 5 α ,17 β -Dihydroxypregn-9(11)-ene-3-one, 7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, bis- γ -lactone (VII)

The resulting organic phase containing 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone (VI) is concentrated to 40 ml and para-toluene sulfonic acid monohydrate (10 mg; 0.042 mmoles; 0.001 equivalents) dissolved in acetone (15 ml) is
 25 added. Crystallization is observed after 30 minutes at reflux. The resulting slurry is concentrated to 50 ml and concentration continued while maintaining a constant volume by the addition of fresh acetone. After 80 ml of acetone has been added the slurry is cooled to 0° and the solids collected by filtration to give the title compound, CMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) 206.07, 176.44, 175.41, 139.66, 123.98, 94.88, 90.99, 47.09, 43.91, 42.36, 41.57, 41.08,
 30 38.93, 36.98, 35.17, 33.01, 32.44, 31.36, 29.10, 23.08, 22.99 and 14.24 δ ; NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 0.94, 1.41, 1.5 – 2.6, 2.80 and 5.70 δ .

EXAMPLE 35 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (CII)



11 α ,17 β -dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (CI, *Drugs of the Future*, 24(5), 488-501 (1999), compound (VI) and International Publication WO98/25948, pages 76 and 280; 5.00 g, 12.0 mmol) is mixed with acetonitrile (15 ml). N-(1,1,2,3,3,3)hexafluoropropyl)-diethylamine (CVI, 2.55 ml, 14.4 mmol) is added to this the steroid mixture and heated to 60° for 2.5 hours. The resulting mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with methanol (100 μ L). A saturated aqueous solution of potassium bicarbonate (15 ml) is added. The acetonitrile is then removed under reduced pressure. The resulting mixture is extracted with methylene chloride (3 x 10 ml). The combined organic phases are washed with a aqueous solution of sodium chloride (10%, 20 ml). The solvent is dried with magnesium sulfate. The solvent is exchanged from methylene chloride to methyl *t*-butyl ether (MTBE). The mixture is concentrated to a final volume of 25 ml. The resulting slurry is stirred overnight and the final product, the title compound, is collected by filtration.

EXAMPLE 36 17 β -hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (CII)

11 α ,17 β -dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7 α ,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ -lactone, methyl ester (CI, 5.00 g, 12.0 mmol) is placed in a flask with acetonitrile (15ml). To this mixture the Ishikawa reagent (2.55 ml, 14.4 mmol) is added and heated to 60° for 2 hrs. The mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with aqueous potassium bicarbonate (20% solution, 18 ml). The acetonitrile is removed under reduced pressure, the aqueous layer is extracted with methylene chloride (3 x 5 ml). The combined organic phases are washed with sodium chloride solution (10%, 10ml). The solvent is exchanged from methylene chloride to

methyl isobutyl ketone/heptane to crystallize the title compound, mp = 198.6-199.5°; MS (m/z) calculated for C₂₄H₃₀O₅ = 398.5 (M+), found 398.9(M+); NMR (CDCl₃) 5.69, 5.64, 3.62, 2.97, 2.84-1.47, 1.38 and 0.93 δ; CMR (CDCl₃) 98.5, 176.4, 172.5, 166.5, 142.3, 125.6, 118.9, 95.0, 51.3, 43.0, 40.3, 35.6, 35.2, 34.1, 33.7, 32.8, 31.2, 29.0, 27.1, 23.2 and 14.0 δ.

5 EXAMPLE 37 17β-hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone, methyl ester (CII)

11α,17β-dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone, methyl ester (CI, 80.00 g, 192.1 mmol) is placed in a flask with acetonitrile (80 ml). To this mixture the Ishikawa reagent (40.8 ml, 224.8 mmol) is added and heated slowly to 45 to 50°, then held for
 10 1-2 hours. The mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with aqueous potassium bicarbonate (72 g in 288 ml). Methylene chloride (240 ml) is added and after mixing the layers are separated. The aqueous phase is extracted with methylene chloride (100 ml). The combined organic phases are washed with water (240 ml). The solvent is exchanged from methylene chloride to methyl *tert*-butyl ether, and branched octane is added
 15 drop wise to crystallize the product which is the title compound.

EXAMPLE 38 17β-hydroxypregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone, methyl ester (CII)

11α,17β-dihydroxypregn-4-en-3-one-7α,21-dicarboxylic acid, γ-lactone, methyl ester (CI, 80.00 g, 192.1 mmol) is placed in a flask with acetonitrile (80 ml). To this mixture the
 20 Ishikawa reagent (40.8 ml, 224.8 mmol) is added and heated slowly to 55 to 50°, then held for 1-2 hours. The mixture is cooled to 20-25° and the reaction is quenched with aqueous potassium bicarbonate (37.3 g in 288 ml). Methylene chloride (240 ml) is added and after mixing the layers are separated. The aqueous phase is extracted with methylene chloride (100 ml). The combined organic phases are washed with water (80 ml). The solvent is exchanged
 25 from methylene chloride to methyl *iso*-butyl ketone, and branched octane is added drop wise to crystallize the product which is the title compound.

EXAMPLE 39 Crystalline 17β-hydroxy-7α-(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (II)

A sample of 17β-hydroxy-7α-(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ-lactone (II) produced by the process of one of EXAMPLEs 3, 13, 21, 24, 31
 30

or 34, or following the general procedure of these EXAMPLEs and making non-critical variations, is obtained in crystalline form and tested by powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) as follows. 17 β -Hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is ground for 30 seconds using a mortar and pestle. The ground sample is placed on zero-background sample holders containing a thin layer of Vaseline™. The sample is examined by PXRD using the Rigaku Miniflex X-ray diffractometer. The diffraction pattern is collected with the sample spinning.

Experimental Conditions for Powder X-Ray Diffraction (XRD):

A Rigaku Miniflex+ X-ray diffractometer was used for the acquisition of the powder XRD patterns. The instrument operates using the Cu K α_1 emission with a nickel filter at 1.50451. The major instrumental parameters are set or fixed at:

	X-ray:	Cu / 30 kV (fixed) / 15 mA (fixed)
	Divergence Slit:	Variable
	Scattering Slit:	4.2° (fixed)
15	Receiving Slit:	0.3 mm (fixed)
	Scan Mode:	FT
	Preset Time:	2.0 sec.
	Scan Width:	0.050°
	Scan Axis:	2Theta/Theta
20	Scan Range:	3.000° to 40.000°

The results of the PXRD are as follows:

	Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
	6.503	13.5812	1.1
	10.589	8.3479	58.3
25	11.557	7.6505	18.2
	12.686	6.9721	4.0
	14.248	6.2111	100.0
	15.144	5.8455	28.3
	16.608	5.3334	50.6
30	17.851	4.9647	84.5
	18.353	4.8300	28.2

	19.537	4.5399	8.3
	20.148	4.4037	22.6
	21.147	4.1977	28.0
	21.695	4.0930	18.6
5	23.199	3.8309	35.1
	24.757	3.5933	13.5
	25.241	3.5255	6.0
	25.905	3.4365	25.7
	27.400	3.2523	18.1
10	28.262	3.1551	2.5
	28.750	3.1026	8.4
	29.955	2.9805	2.9
	30.959	2.8861	8.2
	31.950	2.7988	3.6
15	32.685	2.7375	2.3
	33.207	2.6957	3.2
	33.888	2.6431	4.0
	34.356	2.6081	1.7
	35.607	2.5193	2.7
20	36.144	2.4831	25.6
	37.061	2.4237	4.5
	37.797	2.3782	1.4
	38.496	2.3366	2.4

where

25 Two-Theta Angle is measured in degrees;

d-Spacing is measured in angstroms; and

Relative Intensity is the intensity percentage of each peak relative to the strongest peak at 14.248 degrees.

EXAMPLE 40 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-
30 3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with with spin with the following results:

	Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
5	6.506	13.5742	1.1
	10.603	8.3366	49
	11.600	7.6220	17.7
	12.699	6.9648	2.4
10	14.297	6.1900	100
	15.159	5.8398	18.8
	16.206	5.4648	7.2
	16.650	5.3202	39.6
	17.900	4.9512	59.4
15	18.397	4.8186	27
	19.593	4.5270	8.5
	20.155	4.4022	27.5
	21.194	4.1886	22.4
	21.702	4.0916	15.7
20	23.247	3.8231	24.5
	24.805	3.5865	13.1
	25.256	3.5234	6.2
	25.948	3.4310	29.2
	27.452	3.2464	14.8
25	28.353	3.1452	3
	28.800	3.0974	7.3
	29.952	2.9808	2.2
	31.003	2.8821	7.2
	31.988	2.7956	3.3
30	32.666	2.7391	1.3
	33.245	2.6926	3.4

	33.902	2.6420	2
	34.392	2.6055	1.4
	35.651	2.5163	1.9
	36.192	2.4799	14.9
5	37.105	2.4209	4.4
	37.817	2.3770	1.6
	38.547	2.3336	2.4
	39.394	2.2854	1.6

EXAMPLE 41 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-
3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

15	Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
	6.536	13.5120	1.2
	10.505	8.4141	43.6
	11.548	7.6564	15.7
	12.613	7.0121	3.6
20	14.251	6.2099	100
	15.142	5.8463	29.2
	16.598	5.3368	31.6
	17.848	4.9655	59.3
	18.349	4.8310	34.5
25	19.543	4.5386	11.7
	20.140	4.4054	24.3
	21.002	4.2264	29.1
	21.653	4.1008	15
	23.197	3.8312	48
30	24.754	3.5936	14
	25.945	3.4314	25

	27.403	3.2520	21.4
	28.749	3.1027	11.1
	29.991	2.9770	2.2
	30.953	2.8867	8.1
5	31.857	2.8067	3
	32.683	2.7376	1.4
	33.667	2.6599	3.3
	36.106	2.4856	13.5
	37.054	2.4242	5.5
10	37.795	2.3783	2.2
	38.460	2.3387	2.7

EXAMPLE 42 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 15 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

	Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
	6.508	13.5698	1.4
20	10.590	8.3470	51.6
	11.549	7.6557	16.7
	12.614	7.0118	2.5
	14.247	6.2116	100
	15.147	5.8443	25.2
25	16.156	5.4815	8.5
	16.637	5.3241	42.4
	17.854	4.9638	66.6
	18.345	4.8320	27.2
	19.547	4.5376	9.5
30	20.143	4.4048	26.2
	21.051	4.2167	28.1

	21.691	4.0937	17.4
	23.240	3.8243	34.5
	24.797	3.5875	13.2
	25.207	3.5301	7.1
5	25.903	3.4368	25.8
	27.404	3.2519	16.1
	28.261	3.1552	2.1
	28.752	3.1024	7.4
	29.994	2.9767	2.3
10	30.955	2.8865	9.7
	31.938	2.7999	2.9
	32.586	2.7456	2
	33.196	2.6965	3.2
	33.711	2.6565	2.3
15	34.315	2.6111	1.4
	35.642	2.5169	3.2
	36.147	2.4829	16.2
	37.092	2.4218	4.1
	37.798	2.3781	2.1
20	38.469	2.3382	2.1

EXAMPLE 43 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
10.596	8.3424	29.9
11.597	7.6245	16.6
12.658	6.9877	2.6
14.296	6.1904	100

15.192	5.8272	23.4
16.652	5.3193	30.3
17.899	4.9514	46.1
18.401	4.8176	29.1
19.557	4.5352	8.5
20.158	4.4015	24.5
21.000	4.2269	21.8
21.706	4.0909	14.4
23.246	3.8232	32
24.846	3.5805	13.6
25.953	3.4303	17.7
27.447	3.2469	15
28.798	3.0976	7.5
30.002	2.9760	2.7
31.003	2.8821	7.5
31.955	2.7984	1.2
32.697	2.7366	1.5
33.247	2.6925	4.2
33.708	2.6567	1.7
34.372	2.6069	1.6
35.645	2.5167	1.9
36.154	2.4824	11.1
37.145	2.4184	4.4
37.843	2.3754	1.3
38.537	2.3342	2.5

EXAMPLE 44 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-

one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
10.647	8.3025	40.1
11.602	7.6207	16.1
12.747	6.9388	3.3
14.300	6.1887	100
15.194	5.8263	25.7
16.692	5.3068	40.3
17.945	4.9389	68.4
18.401	4.8176	31.3
19.591	4.5275	8.5
20.154	4.4023	28.1
21.003	4.2262	26.5
21.707	4.0908	15.6
23.247	3.8231	34.4
24.847	3.5804	19
25.956	3.4300	30.3
27.451	3.2464	18.5
28.845	3.0926	9.8
29.958	2.9802	3.5
31.044	2.8784	9.7
32.039	2.7912	1.6
32.716	2.7350	2
33.256	2.6918	4.5
33.713	2.6564	2.8
34.330	2.6100	2.2
35.652	2.5162	3.2
36.196	2.4796	17
37.146	2.4184	5.9
37.804	2.3778	2.2

38.544

2.3338

2.7

EXAMPLE 45 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
6.594	13.3929	1
10.604	8.3359	42.2
11.602	7.6212	16.6
12.699	6.9652	2.8
14.305	6.1866	100
15.200	5.8242	29.4
16.654	5.3188	50.3
17.943	4.9395	74.3
18.442	4.8069	27
19.607	4.5239	10
20.200	4.3925	23.9
21.051	4.2166	28.2
21.746	4.0834	16.8
23.291	3.8161	32.9
24.851	3.5798	13.5
25.299	3.5175	8.1
25.994	3.4250	27.2
27.456	3.2458	18.3
28.352	3.1453	3.1
28.845	3.0926	8
30.053	2.9710	2.9
31.005	2.8819	7.5
31.949	2.7989	2.3

33.254	2.6920	3.5
33.949	2.6384	2.6
34.400	2.6049	1.9
35.653	2.5162	3.2
36.196	2.4796	16.2
37.190	2.4156	5.1
37.840	2.3756	1.9
38.554	2.3332	2.9

EXAMPLE 46 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
10.699	8.2622	53.4
11.702	7.5562	11.8
12.790	6.9156	2.2
14.356	6.1644	73.4
15.298	5.7872	21.2
16.743	5.2908	66.4
18.005	4.9225	100
18.456	4.8034	23.1
19.698	4.5031	6.6
20.297	4.3716	23
21.252	4.1772	29
21.800	4.0735	10.8
23.348	3.8068	29.8
24.949	3.5661	12
25.346	3.5111	4.4

26.003	3.4238	28.7
27.547	3.2353	17.1
28.494	3.1300	4.4
28.854	3.0917	6.6
30.140	2.9626	1.9
31.103	2.8731	7.1
32.054	2.7900	3.7
33.316	2.6871	1.6
33.999	2.6347	4.9
35.751	2.5095	2.5
36.297	2.4730	27
37.206	2.4146	3.9
37.908	2.3715	1.5
38.643	2.3281	2.3

EXAMPLE 47 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
6.557	13.4698	1.2
10.641	8.3067	49.6
11.608	7.6171	12.6
12.708	6.9603	2.5
14.340	6.1713	100
15.205	5.8221	27.9
16.698	5.3048	54.7
17.947	4.9383	84
18.446	4.8060	29.1

19.606	4.5242	12.6
20.202	4.3921	25.9
21.053	4.2162	32.2
21.752	4.0824	19.1
23.295	3.8153	43.7
24.855	3.5793	14.8
25.300	3.5173	7
25.998	3.4245	31.2
27.498	3.2410	21.1
28.358	3.1447	3.3
28.846	3.0925	9.9
30.084	2.9680	2.6
31.053	2.8776	9.9
31.962	2.7978	2.7
32.779	2.7299	1.5
33.288	2.6893	3.3
33.762	2.6527	3.5
34.384	2.6060	1.8
35.701	2.5129	3.9
36.200	2.4794	18.6
37.155	2.4178	5
37.896	2.3722	1.8
38.557	2.3330	2.8

EXAMPLE 48 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
---------------------	---------------	------------------------

6.534	13.5158	1.4
10.545	8.3820	53
11.547	7.6569	13
12.644	6.9952	2.6
14.248	6.2112	100
15.146	5.8447	27.4
16.597	5.3369	55.8
17.851	4.9648	84.3
18.349	4.8312	28.9
19.542	4.5388	12.4
20.144	4.4045	23.5
21.001	4.2267	36.3
21.692	4.0936	20
23.200	3.8308	45.9
24.797	3.5876	12.9
25.239	3.5256	6.1
25.902	3.4369	31.2
27.403	3.2520	22.7
28.259	3.1554	3.8
28.751	3.1025	9.9
29.990	2.9771	2.4
30.995	2.8828	10.4
31.863	2.8063	3.2
32.683	2.7377	1.7
33.889	2.6430	3.7
35.642	2.5169	3
36.143	2.4831	19.1
37.098	2.4214	5
37.801	2.3780	1.9
38.503	2.3362	2.4

EXAMPLE 49 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
6.464	13.6629	1.1
10.457	8.4529	28.8
11.482	7.7003	20.8
12.546	7.0495	4.2
14.185	6.2387	100.0
15.056	5.8797	27.6
16.099	5.5007	7.2
16.545	5.3536	25.9
17.792	4.9810	37.9
18.253	4.8563	26.8
19.455	4.5590	8.7
20.056	4.4237	22.6
20.858	4.2552	17.2
21.604	4.1100	12.8
23.139	3.8407	36.5
24.741	3.5955	11.5
25.152	3.5377	7.4
25.848	3.4440	12.7
27.347	3.2585	13.6
28.700	3.1079	6.2
29.910	2.9849	2.3
30.898	2.8917	5.6
32.599	2.7445	1.5
33.142	2.7008	3.5
33.633	2.6625	1.4

34.265	2.6148	1.5
35.520	2.5252	1.3
36.055	2.4890	8.1
37.016	2.4266	4.4
37.735	2.3820	1.0
38.415	2.3413	2.4
39.349	2.2879	1.8

EXAMPLE 50 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with spin with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
10.652	8.2987	21.1
11.647	7.5915	18.4
12.751	6.9370	2.4
14.350	6.1673	100.0
15.252	5.8044	22.5
16.303	5.4325	8.5
16.707	5.3020	19.7
17.996	4.9252	29.0
18.455	4.8037	24.7
19.679	4.5076	6.1
20.247	4.3823	21.0
21.058	4.2154	16.1
21.759	4.0812	12.6
23.343	3.8076	27.8
24.899	3.5731	12.2
25.346	3.5111	6.1

26.050	3.4177	12.1
27.542	3.2358	9.5
28.899	3.0870	5.7
30.099	2.9666	2.3
31.100	2.8733	5.6
32.042	2.7909	1.3
32.790	2.7290	2.2
33.346	2.6848	4.5
33.801	2.6496	1.1
34.489	2.5983	1.4
35.708	2.5124	1.8
36.244	2.4765	7.9
37.208	2.4145	5.0
37.912	2.3712	1.5
38.599	2.3306	1.2

EXAMPLE 51 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
6.575	13.4329	1.1
10.552	8.3766	29.8
11.551	7.6546	15.3
12.608	7.0148	3.0
14.256	6.2077	100.0
15.150	5.8432	28.5
16.606	5.3342	29.7
17.856	4.9633	49.9
18.353	4.8301	20.9

19.587	4.5284	7.8
20.187	4.3952	19.5
20.955	4.2357	17.2
21.696	4.0928	15.4
23.242	3.8239	41.8
24.800	3.5871	13.5
25.237	3.5260	5.2
25.948	3.4310	17.2
27.449	3.2467	16.2
28.794	3.0979	8.1
29.956	2.9804	2.5
30.997	2.8826	5.9
32.661	2.7395	0.9
33.210	2.6955	3.2
33.801	2.6497	2.6
34.398	2.6050	1.6
35.600	2.5197	1.7
36.145	2.4830	11.9
37.107	2.4208	4.0
37.801	2.3780	1.4
38.531	2.3346	2.1

EXAMPLE 52 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations
 5 another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
6.575	13.4329	1.1
10.552	8.3766	29.8
11.551	7.6546	15.3

12.608	7.0148	3.0
14.256	6.2077	100.0
15.150	5.8432	28.5
16.606	5.3342	29.7
17.856	4.9633	49.9
18.353	4.8301	20.9
19.587	4.5284	7.8
20.187	4.3952	19.5
20.955	4.2357	17.2
21.696	4.0928	15.4
23.242	3.8239	41.8
24.800	3.5871	13.5
25.237	3.5260	5.2
25.948	3.4310	17.2
27.449	3.2467	16.2
28.794	3.0979	8.1
29.956	2.9804	2.5
30.997	2.8826	5.9
32.661	2.7395	0.9
33.210	2.6955	3.2
33.801	2.6497	2.6
34.398	2.6050	1.6
35.600	2.5197	1.7
36.145	2.4830	11.9
37.107	2.4208	4.0
37.801	2.3780	1.4
38.531	2.3346	2.1

EXAMPLE 53 Crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II)

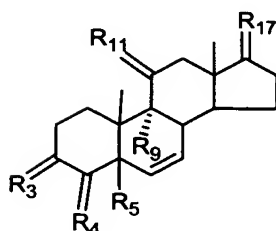
Following the general procedure of EXAMPLE 39 and making non-critical variations another sample of crystalline 17 β -hydroxy-7 α -(5'-methyl-2'-furyl)-pregna-4,9(11)-dien-3-one-21-carboxylic acid, γ -lactone (II) is subjected to PXRD with the following results:

Two-Theta Angle (°)	d-spacing (Å)	Relative Intensity (%)
6.545	13.4926	1.6
10.598	8.3404	27.3
11.595	7.6258	15.6
12.735	6.9456	2.9
14.296	6.1902	100
15.193	5.8268	29.5
16.649	5.3203	28.8
17.902	4.9506	41.1
18.399	4.8181	31.6
19.561	4.5344	10.4
20.153	4.4025	24
21.049	4.2171	21.4
21.708	4.0906	14.8
23.253	3.8222	38.7
24.804	3.5865	13.4
25.289	3.5189	6.8
26.006	3.4235	18.2
27.492	3.2416	15.7
28.802	3.0972	9
29.998	2.9764	2.6
30.961	2.8859	8.2
32.719	2.7348	1.5
33.293	2.6889	3.8
33.756	2.6531	2.8
36.156	2.4823	11
37.113	2.4204	6.2
37.863	2.3742	1

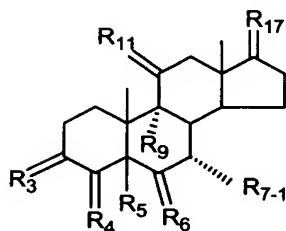
38.550

2.3335

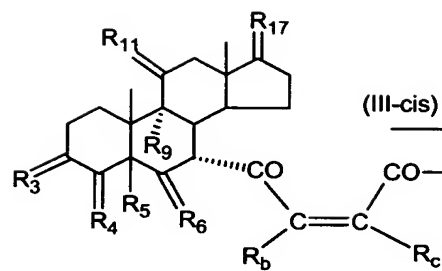
2.1

CHART AWhen R_{7-1} is (-A1)

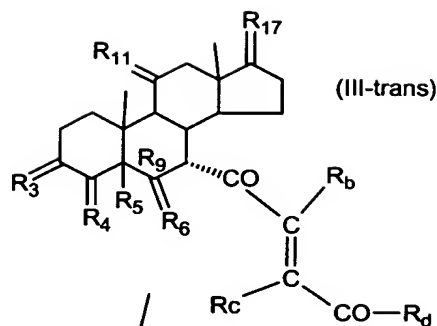
(I)



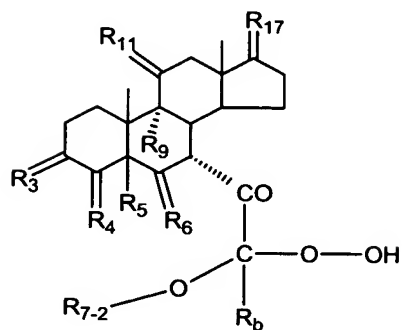
(II)



(III-cis)

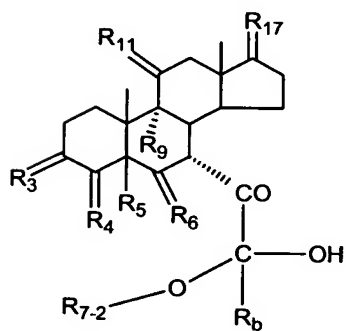


(III-trans)

CHART A - Continued

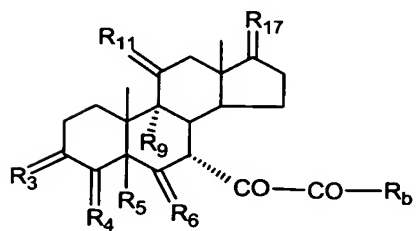
(IV-OOH)

+



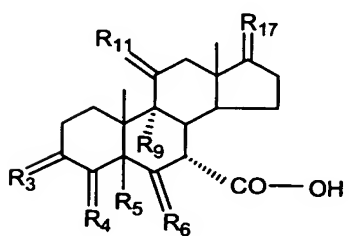
(IV-OH)

+



(V)

+



(VI)

CHART A - Continued

5

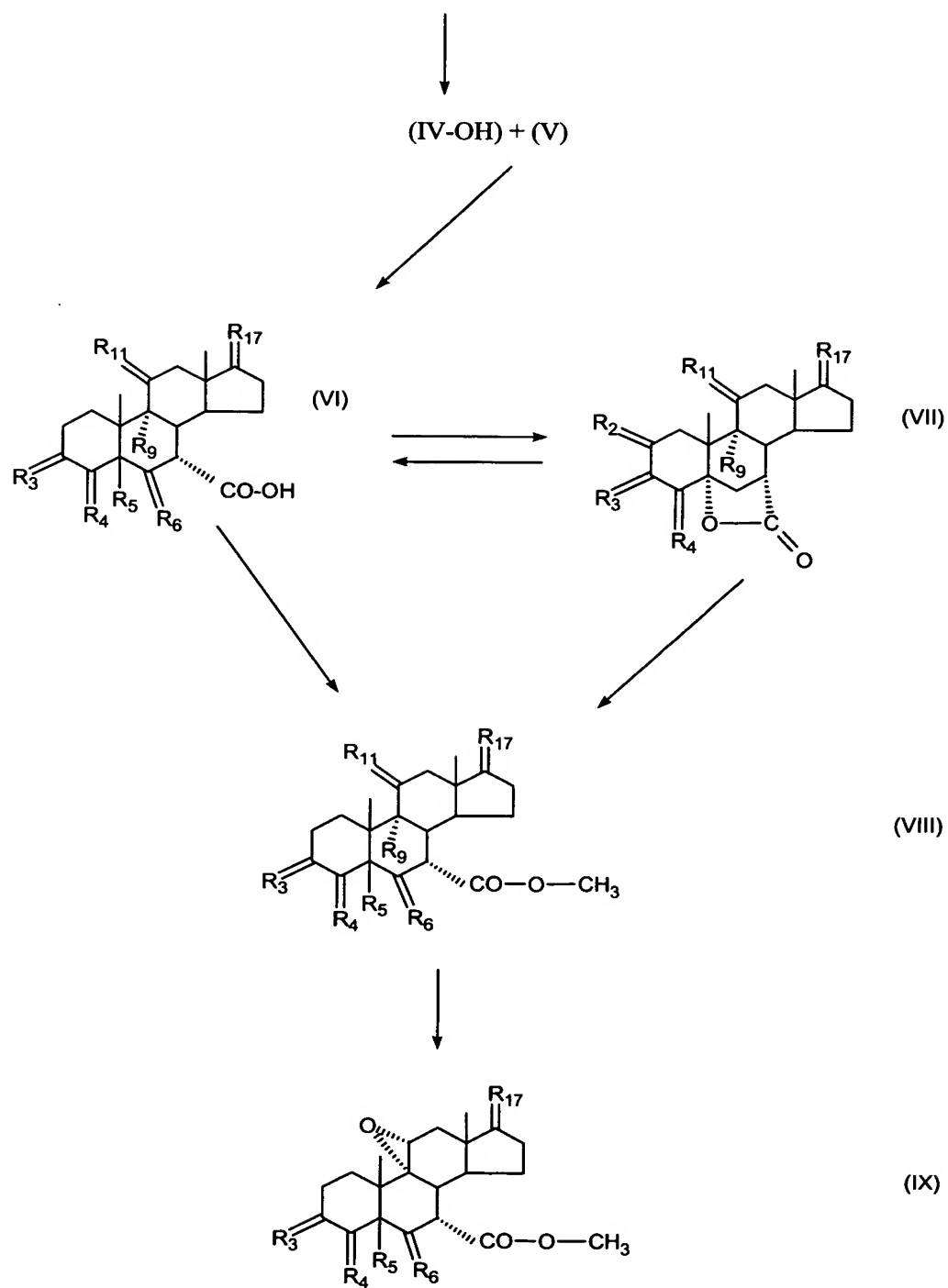
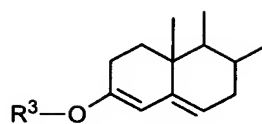
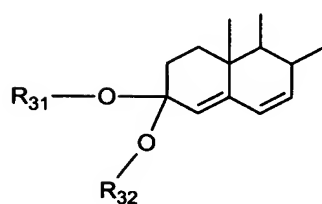


CHART B

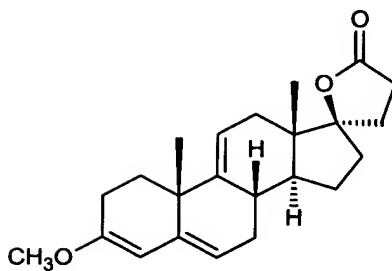


(Alkyl enol ether)

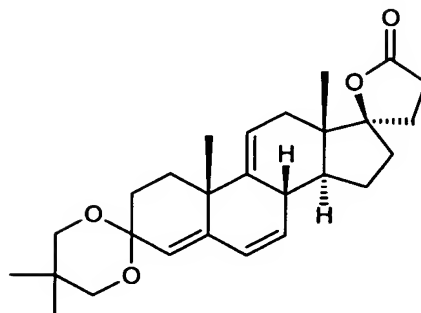


(I-P)

5



(3-methyl enol ether)



(I-P')

10

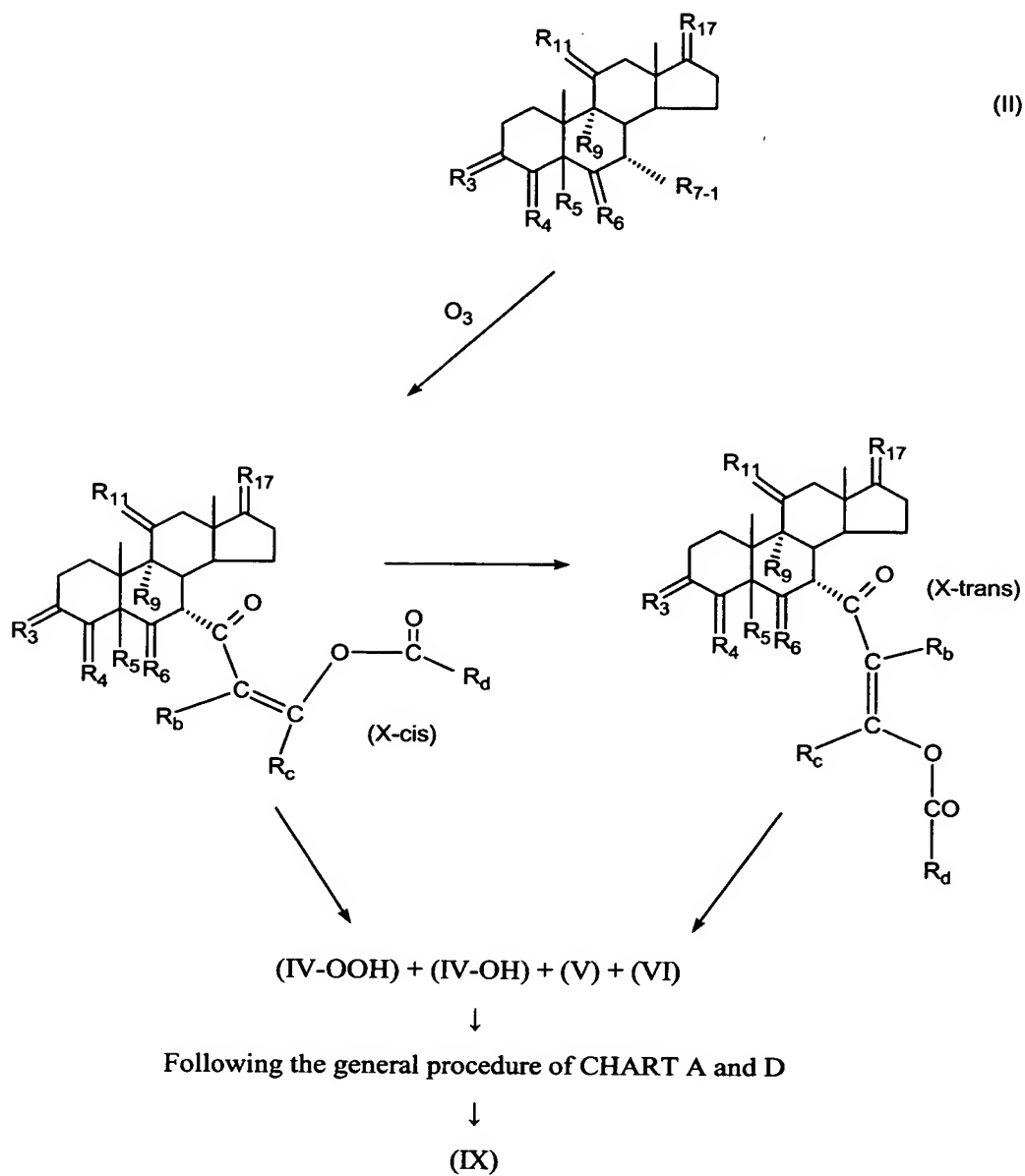
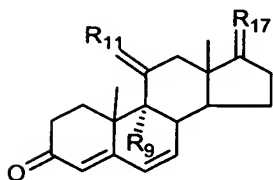
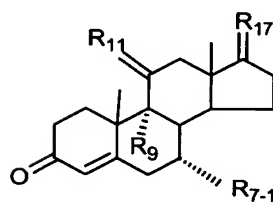
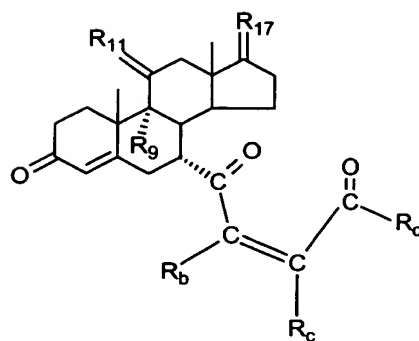
CHART C

CHART DWhen R_{7-1} is (-A1)

(I-unprotected A-ring)



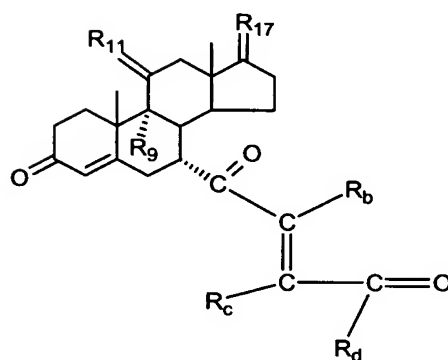
(II-unprotected A-ring)



(III-cis-unprotected A-ring)



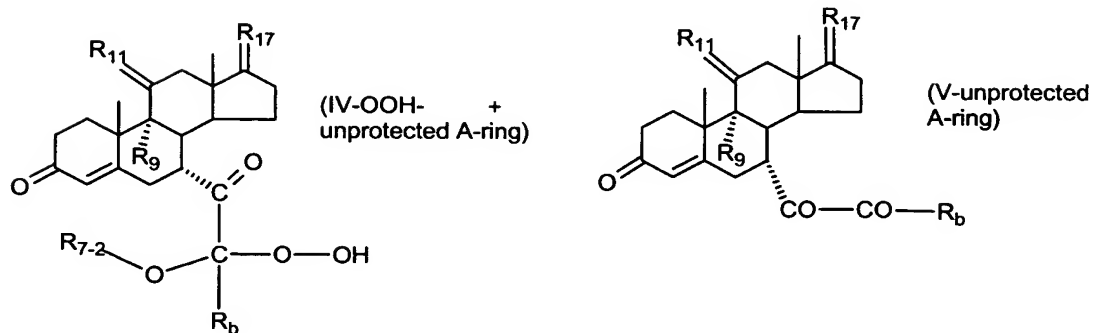
CHART D – Continued



(III-trans-unprotected A-ring)

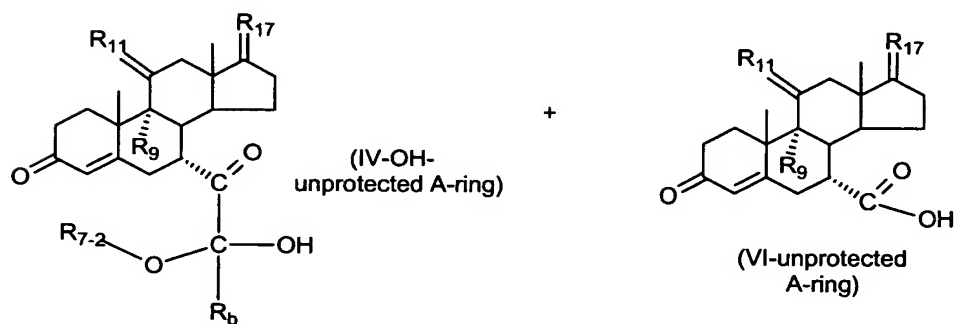
CHART D – Continued(III-*cis*) or (III-*trans*) or mixture of (III-*cis*) and (III-*trans*)

5



+

10



+



15

(IV-OH unprotected A-ring) + (V-unprotected A-ring) + (VI-unprotected A-ring)

CHART D – Continued

(IV-OH unprotected A-ring) + (V unprotected A-ring)

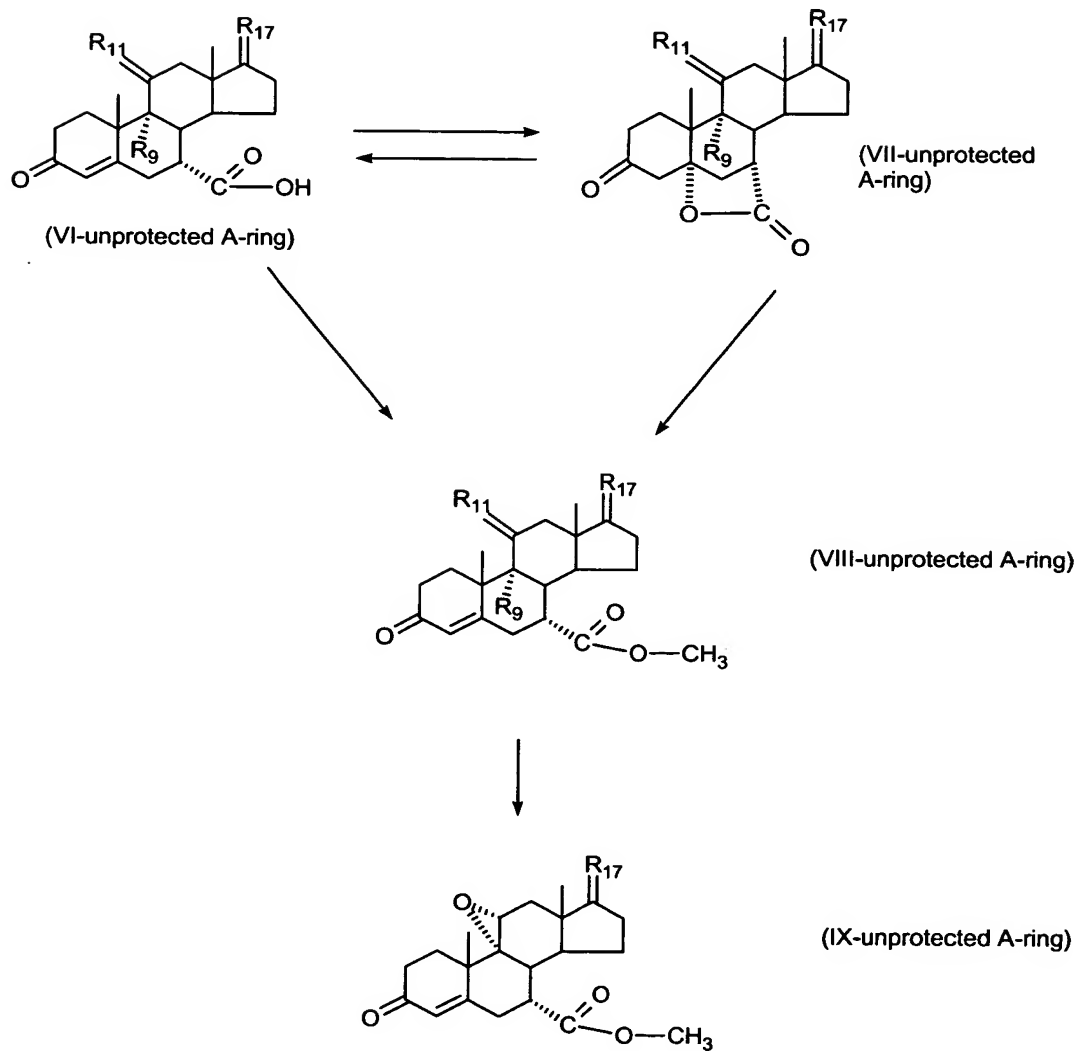
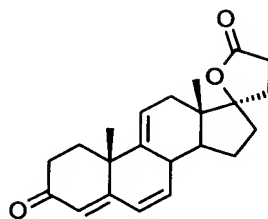
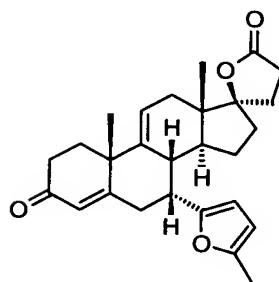


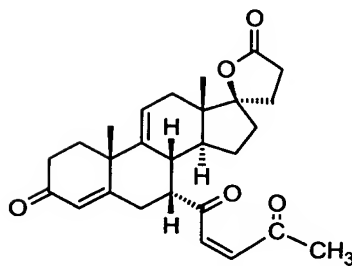
CHART E



(I)



(II)



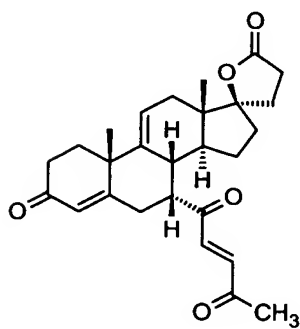
(III-cis)



5

10

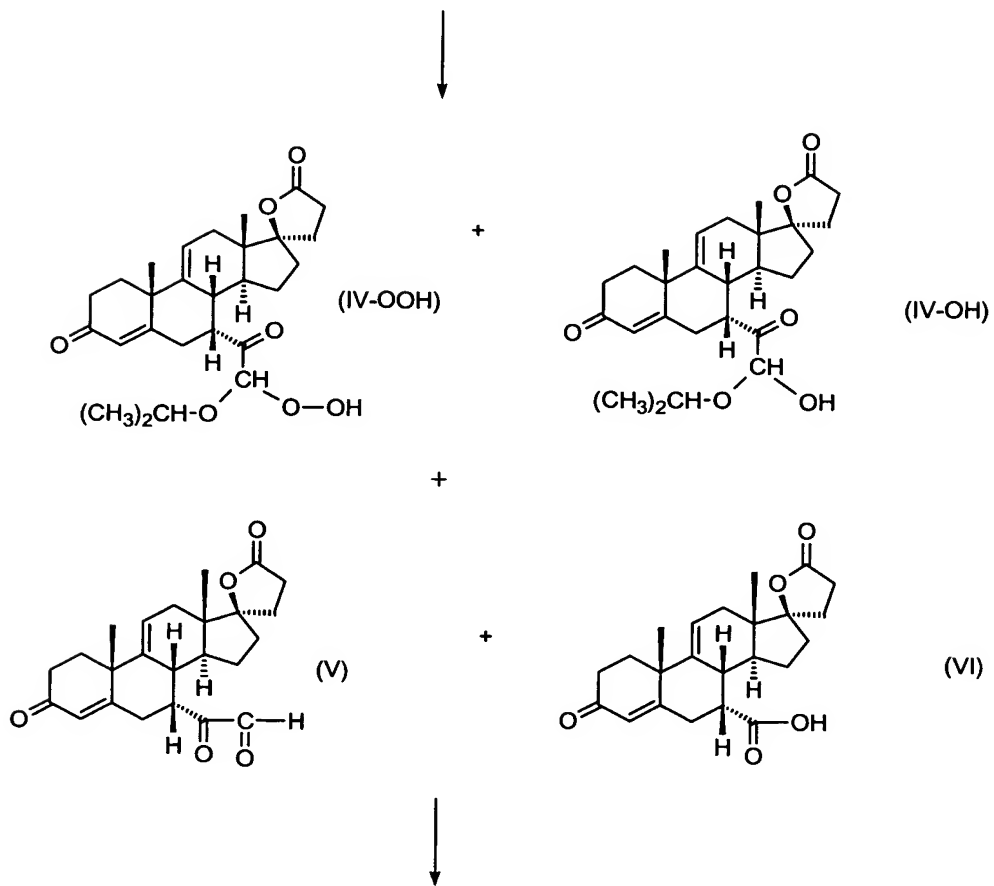
CHART E - Continued



(III-trans)

CHART E - Continued(III-*cis*) or (III-*trans*) or mixture of (III-*cis*) or (III-*trans*)

5



10

(IV-OH) + (V) + (VI)

CHART E – Continued

(IV-OH) + (V)

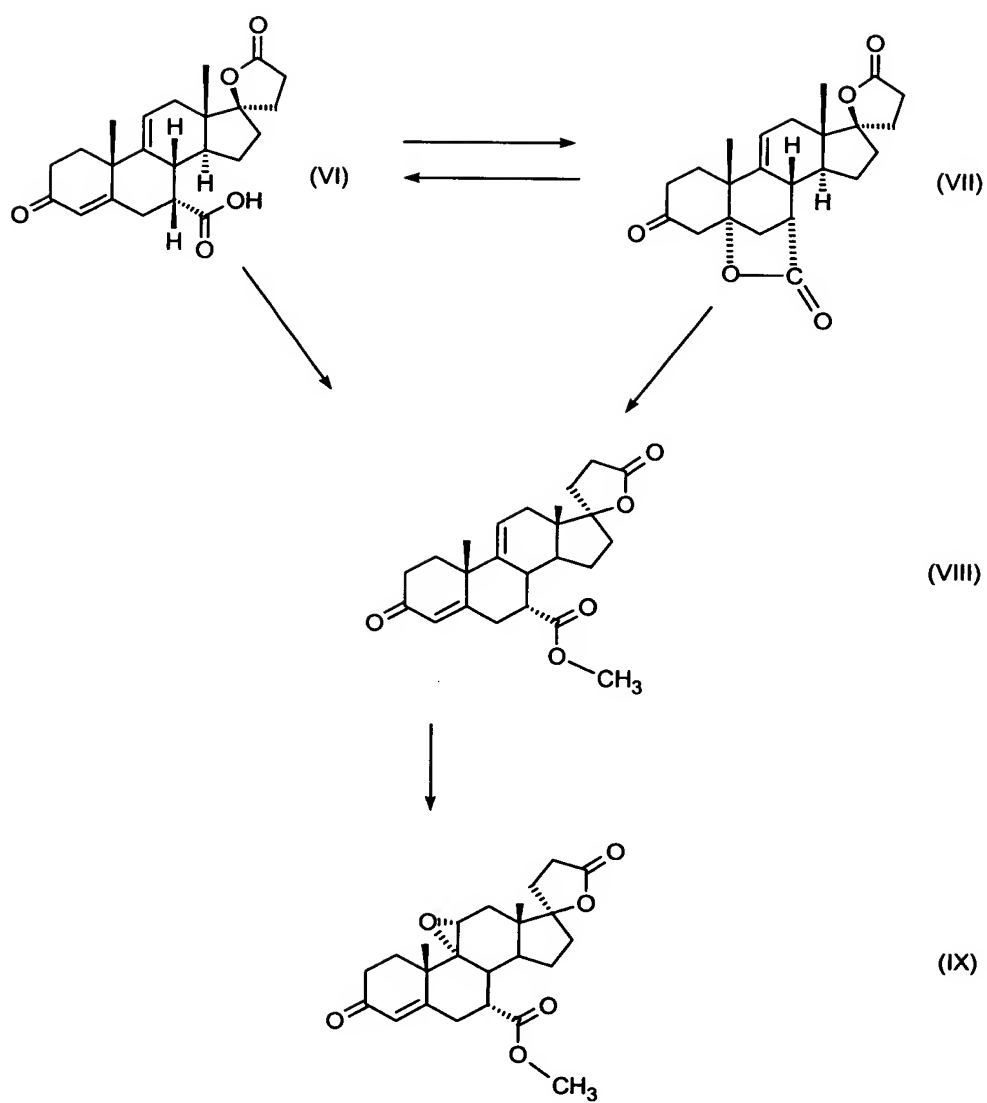
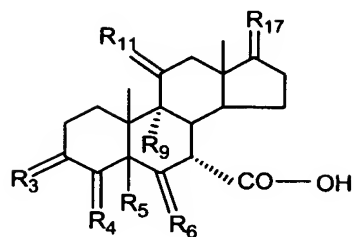
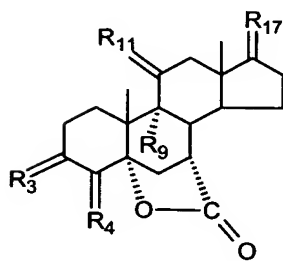
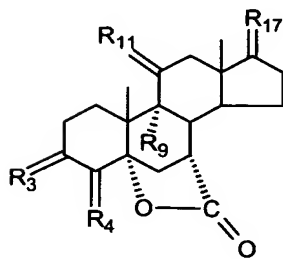


CHART F

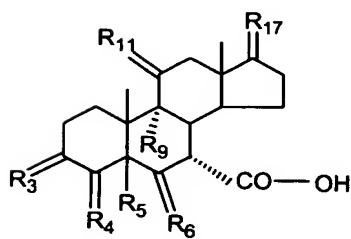
(VI)



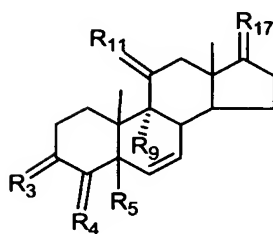
(VII)



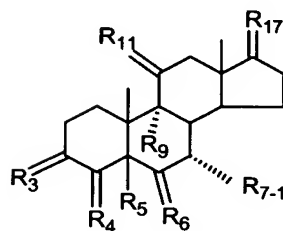
(VII)



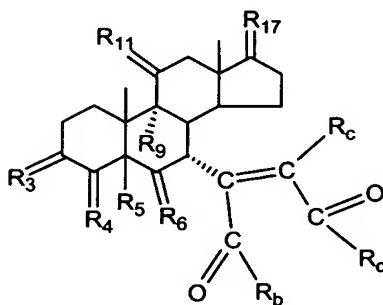
(VI)

CHART GWhen R_{7-1} is (-A2)

(I)



(II)



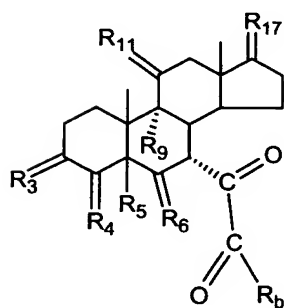
(XIV)



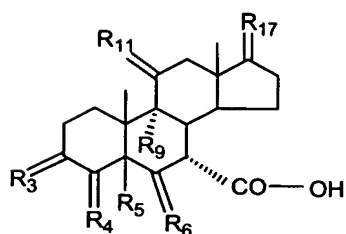
5

10

CHART G - Continued



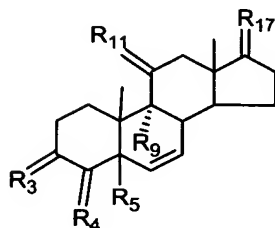
(XV)



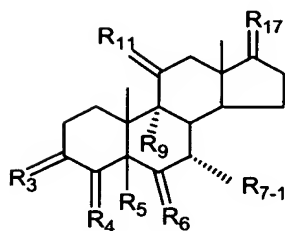
(VI)

CHART H

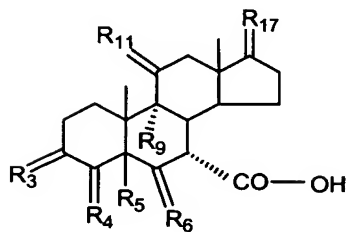
When R₇₋₁ is (-B), (-C) or (-D1, -D2, -D3)



(I)

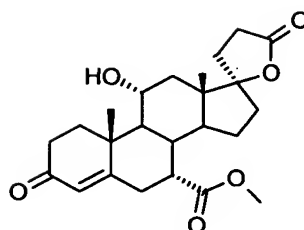


(II)

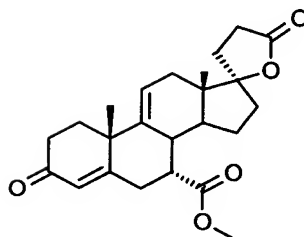


(VI)

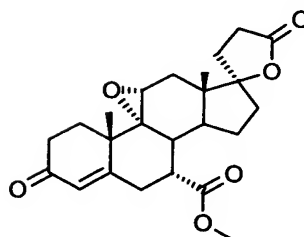
CHART I



(CI)

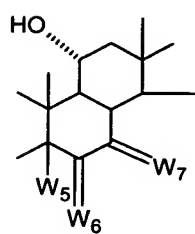


(CII)

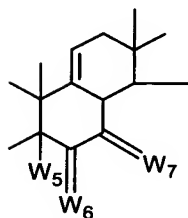


(CIII)

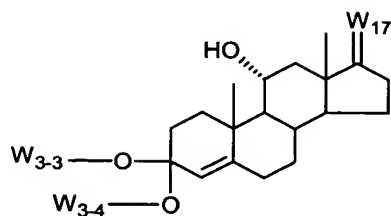
CHART J



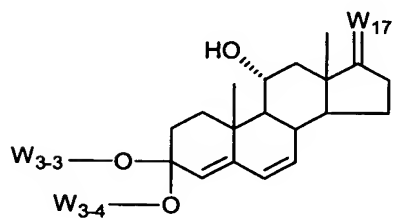
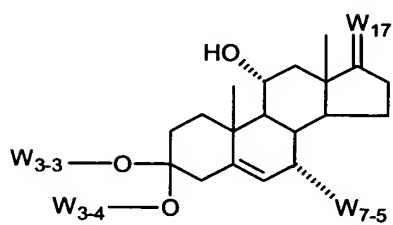
(CIV)



(CV)

CHART K

5



10

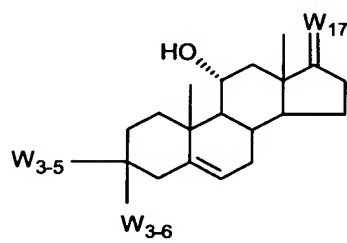
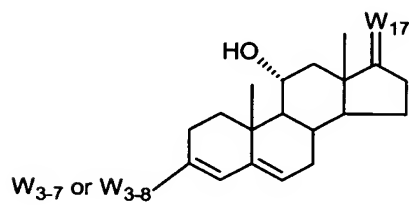
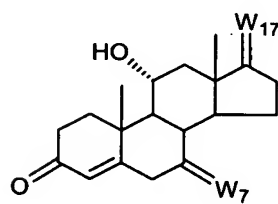
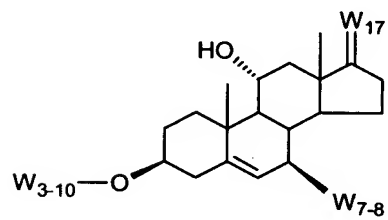


CHART K – Continued

5



10

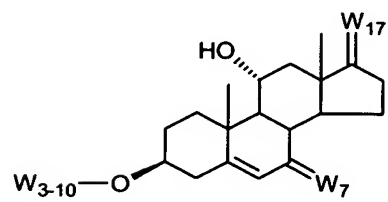
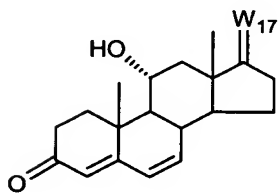
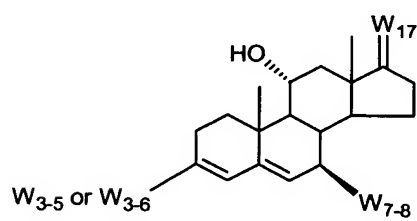
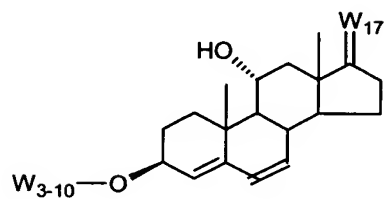
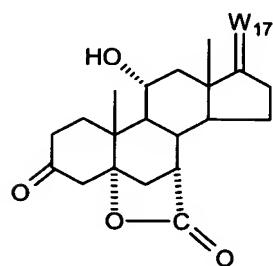
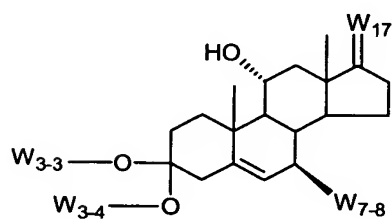


CHART K – Continued

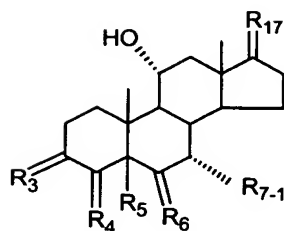


5

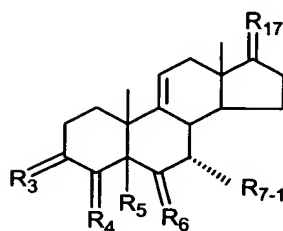
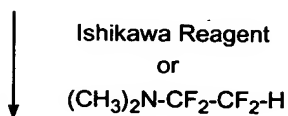


10

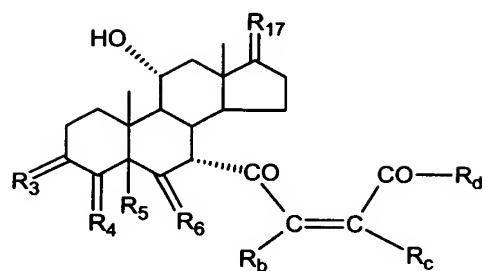
CHART L



(I)

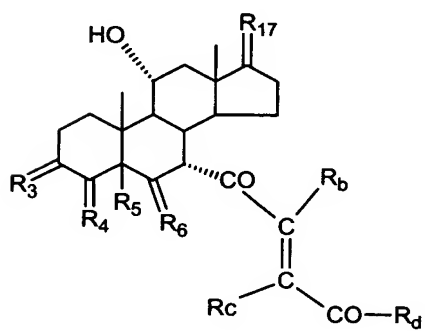


(II)

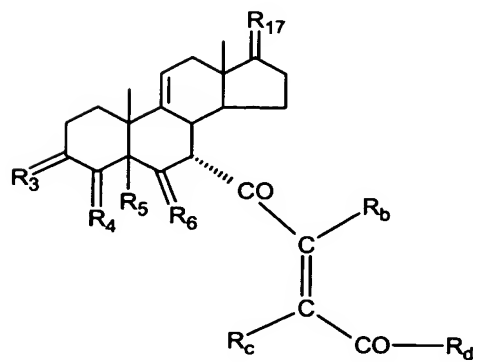
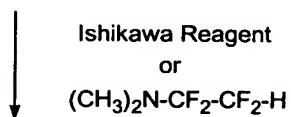
CHART M

(III-cis)

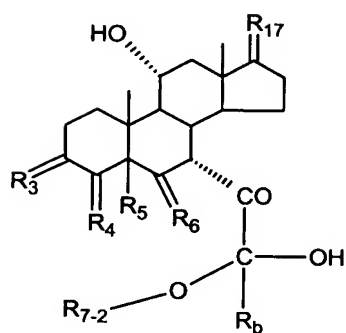
or



(III-trans)

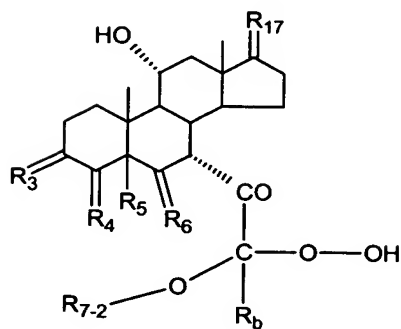


(III-trans)

CHART N

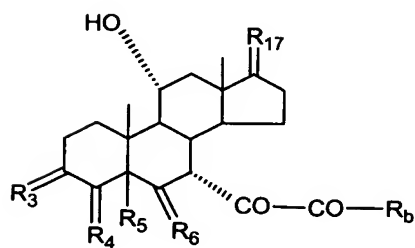
(IV-OH)

or



(IV-OOH)

or



(V)

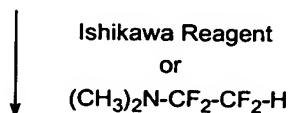
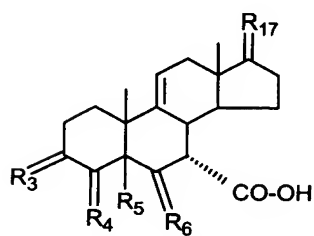
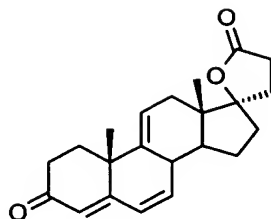


CHART N – Continued



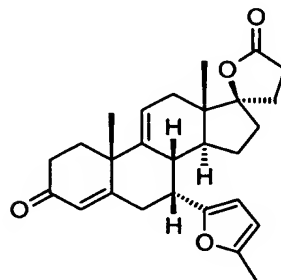
(VI)

CHART O



(I)

2-methylfuran
absolute ethanol
boron trifluoride etherate

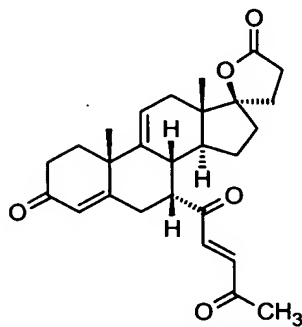


(II)

dibromatin
acetate
aqueous hydrochloric acid



CHART O – Continued



(III-trans)

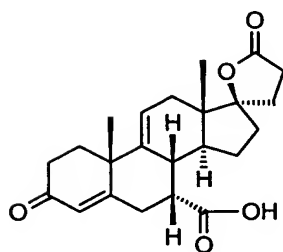


ozone

dimethylsulfide

hydrogen peroxide

bicarbonate



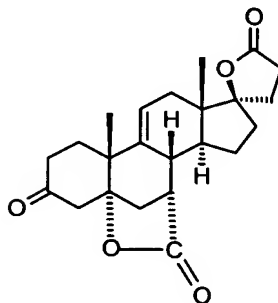
(VI)



p-toluenesulfonic acid

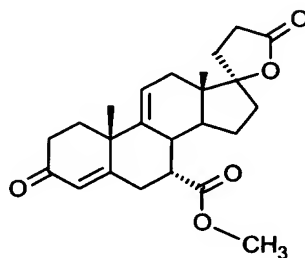


CHART O – Continued



(VII)

bicarbonate, dimethylsulfate



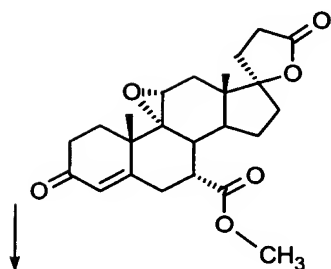
(VIII)

trichloroacetamide/hydrogen peroxide

ethanol

methyl ethyl ketone

CHART O – Continued



(IX)